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Commission Government in Illinois Cities

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COMMISSION GOVERNMENT IN ILLINOIS CITIES

BY

ALFRED CHESTER HANFORD

A. B. University of Illinois, 1912

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1913

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THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

June 7, 1913

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Alfred Chester Hanford

ENTITLED Commission Government in Illinois Cities

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Master of Arts

John A. Fairlie
In Charge of Major Work

James W. Garner
Head of Department

Recommendation concurred in:

Committee
on
Final Examination

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Over 150 letters were sent to city officials and prominent citizens in the cities investigated. Personal visites were made to Springfield and Decatur.

Chapter I

Municipal Organization under the Illinois Commission Government Statute of 1910.

Commission government as applied to the administration of municipal affairs means government by a small board or commission. The various plans of commission government in the United States differ in some important respects, but all contain in one form or another certain fundamental features which are essential to any system of government by commission. These essential characteristics are; (1) the concentration of legislative and administrative authority in the hands of a small governing board; (2) the election of the members of this board from the city at large instead of from wards; (3) the assignment of each commissioner to a particular department, for the administration of which he is responsible both to the people and the council; and (4) one or more "checks", the purpose of which is to secure popular control.

The history of the commission government movement covers only the short period of twelve years. In 1901, following the tidal wave at Galveston, the legislature of Texas granted that city a charter which placed the government in charge of a small board of five commissioners. This board reorganized the government of the city, established its credit, built a large sea-wall, and raised the grade several feet so as to prevent the recurrence of a disaster

similar to that of 1900. The plan worked so successfully in Galveston that in 1905 the city of Houston adopted a like system. Prior to 1907 commission government was confined entirely to these two cities in the southwestern part of the United States. Committees and groups of interested citizens from Iowa and Kansas visited the Texan cities in 1906 and 1907, and brought back reports of the improved conditions in those municipalities. In 1907 Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Denison, and Greenville, Texas, were granted commission government charters by the Texan legislature; Iowa passed a general commission government act for all cities over 25,000; Kansas adopted two general laws, one applying to cities over 15,000, and another to cities from 2,000 to 15,000; while North and South Dakota adopted similar acts. By the spring of 1908 about twelve cities had installed the new system. Up to this time the movement had not spread beyond the region west of the Mississippi River. In June 1908 commission goverment first made its appearance in the East, in the cities of Gloucester and Haverhill, Massachusetts; and a little later in the same year Tulsa and Ardmore, Oklahoma, submitted and adopted "home rule" charters providing for the commission form.[1] Since 1909 the number of cities adopting commission government has rapidly increased until today there are about two hundred and eighty-

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1. E. S. Bradford, "Commission Government in American Cities", p. 1-112, also E. S. Bradford, in "The Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science", for November, 1911, p. 3-11.

five municipalities operating under its principles.[1] The commission form of government movement in Illinois did not begin until late in the year 1908, and it was the spring of 1911 before the plan actually went into effect.

I. Form of Municipal Government in Illinois under the General Cities and Villages Act of 1872.

Prior to the constitution of 1870, Illinois cities were incorporated under special charters granted by the General Assembly, there was no uniformity of organization, and legislative abuse was not uncommon. The constitution of 1870 placed a prohibition upon special legislation, and in 1872 a General Cities and Villages Act was passed, which at that time was the best law of its kind in the country.[2] The Act of 1872 provides for a plan of organization which is somewhat more elastic and less complicated than that embodied in the general laws of most other states. A mayor, council, city clerk, city treasurer, and city attorney are elected by popular vote, while other officers may be created by the council when necessary. The Illinois law of 1872 conforms somewhat with the modern tendency of making subordinate municipal officials appointive, in its provisions for a smaller number of elective officers than was common at the time of its adoption. The members of the council are elected from wards for two years, there being two members from each ward; and elections are so arranged that one alderman is chosen from each ward each year. The powers conferred upon the board of aldermen are similar to

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1. National Municipal Review, January 1913; April 1913.
2. John A. Fairlie, "Essays in Municipal Administration", p.111-114.

those exercized under the mayor and council in other states, and include a detailed list of subjects for police regulation, the power to appropriate money, and a limited power of taxation. The Cities and Villages Act of 1872 also gives the council the unusual power to create municipal offices (in addition to those specifically enumerated) upon a two-thirds vote. The unusual power of creating municipal offices, and control over appropriations, make the board of aldermen in Illinois cities more influential factors of municipal government than in most states.[1]

The mayor is also given important powers, and in a majority of cities is a dominating organ of the city government. He is elected from the city at large for a period of two years; is presiding officer of the council; has the power of veto, and the authority to appoint all non-elective employees subject to confirmation by the council. The mayor's control over the administration is further increased by his limited power to remove all officers appointed by himself. He must, however, file the reasons for removal with the council, and that body may by two-thirds vote reinstate an officer so removed.[2]

Despite its many advantages when compared with other systems of aldermanic government, the plan of municipal organization provided for in the Act of 1872, is subject to those limitations which are inherent in any form of government by a mayor and council. The General Cities and Villages Act and other legislation also places so narrow a limit upon the power of local taxation that

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1. Revised Statutes of Illinois, 1911, Chapter 24, Articles I - XII, p. 243-287; also J. A. Fairlie,"Essays in Municipal Administration", p.111-114.
2. Ibid.

many cities have found it impossible to keep pace with the demands of an increasing population. Then too, it does not sufficiently concentrate the administration of all local affairs in the city corporation. Cities and villages remain a part of the township in which they are located, and the township officers are elected independently. Laws have been passed for the establishment of school boards, drainage commissions, park boards, etc., each with a separate jurisdiction which usually overlaps that of the city corporate. The result has been an increased complexity of municipal government, the confusion of the voters with a long list of elective officials, and the reduction of responsibility on the part of the various local officers.[1]

For about forty years the incorporated cities of Illinois have been governed under a system such as that described above. Conditions have been no worse than those existing in other states. In some municipalities a fair degree of efficiency has been attained, in others there has been mismanagement and corruption. The principal evils in Illinois city government have been those arising from inefficient and incompetent administration, and from partisanship, machine politics, and petty grafting.

II. The Commission Form of Government Movement in Illinois.

The commission form of goverment movement in Illinois began during the winter of 1908-09. The city of Springfield became interested in the fall of 1908, when a number of addresses and lectures on the subject were held in the Y.M. C.A. and other places of public assembly. Finally a mass

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1. Revised Statutes of Illinois, 1911, Ch.24, p.314-472.

meeting was called in the Sangamon County Court House to formulate plans for securing the adoption of a commission government law for the cities of Illinois. A committee of eleven was appointed from this body which in turn appointed a subcommittee of three to draft a law for presentation to the General Assembly. In the meantime other Illinois cities had become interested, and several laws were drawn up by several local organizations. Representatives from these various committees met in Springfield, canvassed the bills proposed by each city, and after selecting those provisions which were regarded as most satisfactory, formulated the same into a bill.[1] The bill as thus prepared was introduced by Senator R. J. Barr in the Illinois Senate on February 9, 1909;and a special committee of five was sent to Galveston, Houston, and Dallas,Texas, for the purpose of investigating the workings of commission government in those cities.[2] On April 15 of the same year this committee submitted its report to the Senate, pointing out the most important charter provisions in the cities visited, and indicating the general improvement in municipal government under commission form.[3] On May 5, 1909, Senator Barr's bill was passed in the Senate by a vote of forty-three to two, and sent to the House where it was referred to the committee on municipal affairs,but never reported back to the House.[4]

During this period the sentiment in favor of commis-

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1. Communication from Mr. S. S. Breese, (Member of Committee).
2. Illinois Senate Journal, 1909, p. 236.
3. Ibid, p. 641-648.
4. Ibid, p. 961. For text of bill see Illinois State Journal 1909, p. 878-902.

sion government was rapidly growing, and in the summer of 1909, a mass meeting was held in Peoria, out of which emanated a persistent demand that the legislature pass a law providing for this new system of municipal government.[1]

In calling the extra session of the General Assembly in December, 1909, Governor Deneen included the commission form of government law as one of the propositions to be considered by that body. At this session a commission form of government law was provided for, by an amendment to the General Cities and Villages Act of 1872. The law as finally adopted differed slightly from the bill as originally introduced, and was not entirely satisfactory to those who had led in the movement for its adoption. The chief objection was that the percentage of names necessary to recall an elective officer was excessive, being seventy-five per cent instead of twenty-five as recommended in the original draft.[2] The Act as approved on March 10, 1910, was amended somewhat in May, 1911.[3]

III. Provisions of the Illinois Commission Government Act.

The commission form of government law in its final form is designated, "An Act to amend an Act entitled 'an Act to provide for the incorporation of cities and villages' approved April 10, 1872, and all acts amendatory thereto by adding Article XIII."[4] It does not contain a new enumeration of the powers of govern-

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1. Communication from Mr. S. S. Breese.
2. See Laws of Illinois, Special Session 1909-10, p.12-41; also Senate Journal, Special Session 1909-10, p.261-86.
3. For law as amended see Illinois Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, p.287-312.
4. Illinois Revised Statutes, 1911, p. 287.

ment, but as an amendment to the General Act of 1872 provides a new system of government for any city under 200,000 which may adopt it, and confers upon such city a number of important powers, authorities, and rights in addition to those already vested in it by virtue of the Act of 1872. In general the provisions of the Illinois law are similar to those of the Iowa Statute of 1907, and ~~in many instances it seems as though the language has been copied bodily from the latter statute~~. The most important differences are: (1) the Iowa law applies only to cities over 7,000 population, while the Illinois law is applicable to all cities under 200,000; (2) in cities of 7,000-25,000 population, the Iowa law provides for a commission of three instead of five members; (3) the Iowa system contains provisions for a civil service commission and appointment upon merit, while the Illinois law makes it possible for commission government cities to adopt the optional civil service act of 1895; and (4) in Illinois the percentage of signatures necessary for a recall petition is fifty-five per cent (seventy-five per cent as originally adopted) whereas in Iowa it is only twenty-five per cent.[1]

1. Method of Adoption.

According to the provisions of the law, any incorporated village or city under 200,000 population may adopt the commission form of government. Whenever the electors of any city equal in number to one-tenth of the votes cast for all candidates for mayor at the last preceding city election petition the county judge for an election on the proposition of

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1. For Illinois law see Illinois Revised Statutes 1911, p. 287-

of adopting the commission form, it is the duty of that officer to submit the question at an election within sixty days. A majority of all votes cast in any city is necessary to secure the adoption of commission government, but if the proposition is defeated it cannot be presented in that municipality for at least two years.[1] Any city or village which has operated for more than four years under commission form may abandon such organization upon popular vote.[2]

2. The fundamental features of the Illinois Commission Form of Government Law.

The essential and fundamental features of the Illinois Commission Form of Government Act are: (a) the concentration of all the powers of government in a board of five commissioners, giving to these officers oversight over the administration, and broad appointing power, as well as all legislative authority; (b) the division of the function of government into five departments and the assignment of a commissioner to each department; (c) the election of the commissioners at large, and without reference to party or political affiliation; (d) "checks" to secure popular control; and (e) certain miscellaneous provisions, the purpose of which is to obtain more responsible and efficient government. The first four features of this outline have to do with the

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312; for text of Iowa law for commission governed cities, see E.S.Bradford, "Commission Government in American Cities" p 313-338.
1. Revised Statute of Illinois, p. 288-89.
2. Ibid, p. 308.

form of the governing body, its powers and size, and the organization of the electorate. The last two features pertain to the methods provided for securing responsibility. The former constitute the basic elements of any plan of commission government, while the latter provisions are desirable, though not necessary, parts of a system of government by commission.

(a) and (b) The concentration of the powers of government in a small board, the division of the functions of government into five departments, and the assignments of a commission to each: The Illinois commission government law provides for a system of government which is much more simple, direct, and business-like than the aldermanic form. To a board of five commissioners, nomin ated and elected from the city at large, and without reference to party, are given all the legislative and administrative powers and duties formerly exercised by the mayor, city council, board of library trustees, city clerk, city attorney, city engineer, city treasurer, city comptroller and all other executive, legislative and administrative officers in cities incorporated under the Cities and Villages Act of 1872.[1] There are several exceptions, however, to these general provisions, which show that the centralization of the powers of government has not been complete, and that there is yet some confusion and complexity of organization. The Board of Local Improvements provided for by an Act of 1897 remains a separate and distinct body, as do the Park and Roadway Commissioners elected under the special

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1. Revised Statutes of Ill.,1911,Ch.24, sec.193b23,p.297.

laws pertaining thereto.[1] The school boards, justices of the peace, and town officers are elected separately and exercize their functions independently of the commissioners.

As a legislative body three of the five commissioners constitute a quorum, and the affirmative vote of three is necessary for the adoption of any motion, ordinance, or resolution. The mayor, however, has no veto. Regular meetings of the council are held at least once a week, while special meetings may be called any time, and all meetings whether special or regular shall be open to the public.[2]

On the administrative side all the executive functions are distributed among five departments with a commissioner in charge of each, as follows:[3]

The Department of Public Affairs (Mayor)
The Department of Accounts and Finance
The Department of Public Health and Safety
The Department of Street and Public Improvements
The Department of Public Property

The mayor is ex-officio commissioner of Public Affairs and is elected by the people as such, while the commission-council at its first regular meeting designates by a majority vote the assignment of the other commissioners to their respective departments.[4] All of the commissioners are legally equal in power and authority, and the position of the mayor is somewhat

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec. 193b 23, p.297.
2. Ibid, Ch. 24, sec.193b 32, p. 300.
3. Ibid, Ch. 24, sec.193b 23, p. 297.
4. Ibid, Ch. 24, sec.193b 24, p. 297-8.

different from what it is under the aldermanic system. In fact the commission as a whole possesses the executive power which formerly belonged to the mayor alone, and this officer has become merged, so to speak, in the general governing body. The mayor presides at all council meetings, signs all contracts for the city, and is given the general authority "to supervise all departments and report to the council for its action all matters requiring attention in any department."1. Like every other commissioner he has a vote upon all matters coming before the council, but has no power of veto. Notwithstanding the fact that the mayor is merged into the governing and legislative body, the dignity of his title, the increased salary, and the power of general oversight tend to make him of greater influence than the other members of the commission. The position of the mayor under the Illinois commission plan of government is rather vague, as he is only the nominal head of the government, and is assigned to a department in which there are no very important functions requiring close administrative oversight and supervision as do the functions which fall in the other departments. In many cities the mayor is given a number of unrelated duties, and his department is often made the "dumping ground" for functions which cannot readily be assigned elsewhere. There is a certain weakness in such an arrangement, ~~which can be better discussed after a study of the system in operation, and which only needs mention here.~~ First, there is no head to the administration, and second, the efficiency of the mayor

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch. 24, sec.193b 35, p. 300.

as an administrative officer is decreased by the unimportance of his duties. It should be noted, however, that the power of the mayor, and the relationship and independence of the several commissioners in any city varies according to the method of distributing the municipal functions and determining the duties of the respective commissioners. As will be pointed out later the position and power of the mayor in any city depends not only upon the character of the duties assigned him, but also upon the personality of that officer, upon the degree to which the commissioners work in harmony, and upon the fact as to whether he belongs to the majority or minority faction in the council.

The council in each city determines by ordinance the powers and duties to be performed by each department, prescribes the duties of the various officers and employees; and has the authority to require an employee in one department to render service in another, and to make such other rules and regulations as are necessary or proper for the efficient conduct of the business of the city.[1]

"The mayor and each of the commissioners", according to the provisions of the law, "shall have an office at the municipal building or rooms and shall devote such time to the duties of their respective offices as a faithful discharge thereof may require." In cities of 20,000 population and over, the mayor and commissioners are required to devote at least six hours daily to the performance of their official duties, thus giving to those cities a governmental system which is in operation not merely once a week, but every hour

1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 23, p. 297.

of the day and every day of the year.[1] The salaries paid the mayor and commissioners are much larger than those paid to the mayor and aldermen, especially in the larger cities where the officers must give the great share of their time to the affairs of the city. Even in the smaller cities the compensation is sufficiently great to warrant a mayor or commissioner in giving a fair amount of personal attention to the functions of his department. The salaries vary with the size of the city or village, as follows:[2]

Size	Mayor	Commissioner
Not over 2000	$ 50	$ 40
2,000 to 5,000	250	100
5,000 to 10,000	600	400
10,000 to 15,000	1200	900
15,000 to 20,000	2000	1700
20,000 to 30,000	2500	2000
30,000 to 40,000	3500	3000
40,000 to 60,000	4000	3500
60,000 to 80,000	4500	4000
80,000 to 100,000	5000	4500
100,000 to 200,000	6000	5000

Under the aldermanic system one of the causes for inefficiency and lack of responsibility is that the city clerk, city treasurer, and city attorney are elected by the people. Inefficient men are often elected to these offices, and there is a lack of correlation between the various departmental heads, the council, and the mayor. By the provisions of the Illinois Commission Government Actttheseofficers are made appointive by the council-commission. The removal of the subordinate

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec. 193b 30, p. 299-300.
2. Ibid, p. 300.

and non-policy determining officials of the city from the ballot, and making them appointive and controllable by the commission-council, is one of the advantageous features of the Illinois and most other commission form of government laws. The council by a majority vote may in their discretion select the city clerk, corporation counsel, city attorney, assistant city attorney, city treasurer and the necessary officers provided for in the local improvements act of 1897, providing that the Commissioner of Streets and Local Improvements is ex-officio commissioner of streets and a member of the Board of Local Improvements.[1] As originally adopted, the Illinois Commission Government statute gave the council authority to appoint, in addition to the above-mentioned heads of departments, the chief of police, chief of the fire department, comptroller, city physician, harbor master and market master.[2] By an amendment of 1911 these officers were omitted from the list of assistants to be appointed by the council, and that body may by ordinance make them appointed either by itself or by the commissioners of the respective departments to which they are subordinate.[3]

The functions of the chief of police, chief of the fire department, city physician, city comptroller, etc., fall definitely within some one of the five departments, and are of such nature that the appointment and removal of the officer

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, sec.193b 24, p. 297-298.
2. Laws of Illinois, Special Session 1909-10, sec.193b 23, p.24.
3. Revised Statutes of Ill., Ch.24, sec.193b 24, p.297, and secs. 193b 26-29, p. 298-299.

exercising them should be placed in the hands of the commissioner who is superintendent of the department involved. As will be pointed out later, however, some of the cities have not taken advantage of this amendment, and the chief of police, chief of the fire department and other assistants continue to be elected by the council as a whole, instead of by the commissioners who have direct supervision of their work.

For the selection of minor officers and employes the Illinois commission form of government law does not contain any provisions for a merit system or a civil service commission; but merely provides that in all cities which adopt the optional civil service act of 1895, municipal employees shall be appointed accordingly.[1] Springfield and Waukegan are the only cities under commission government which have taken advantage of the Act of 1895.[2] All minor officers, assistants, and employees in cities not adopting the civil service act of 1895 or the police and fire commission act of 1905 are made appointive by the respective commissioners to whom they are subordinate, and may be removed by such commissioner when in his judgment the efficient conduct of the city's affairs demands such action.[3]

(c) The nomination and election of mayor and commissioners: So far we have discussed the organization, form and power of of the governing body as outlined in the Illinois statute of 1910. Let us now direct our attention to the manner in

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec. 193b 26, p. 298.
2. Springfield and Waukegan adopted the civil service act of 1895 prior to the adoption of commission government
3. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 28, p. 299.

which the mayor and commissioners, who constitute this small governing body, are chosen. Special provisions are embodied in the law which have for their purpose: (1) the election of a more efficient, more honest and better qualified class of city officials; (2) the elimination of political ~~party~~ influence and corruption in elections; and (3) the offsetting of any danger which might arise from the concentration of too much power in the hands of a few men. The ballot is not only made short with the idea that the attention of the voters will be centered upon the qualifications of the men seeking office, but all nominations and elections are made from the city at large and without reference to party. The possibility of political corruption is lessened, and non-partisan nominations and elections are secured by nomination upon petition, an alphabetical arrangement of names on the primary and general election ballot, the prohibition of party labels and designations, and the stipulation of severe penalties for election frauds.

The law provides that on the third Sunday in April 1911, next after the adoption of its provisions by any municipality and every four years thereafter, there shall be a general municipal election at which a mayor and four commissioners shall be elected without respect to wards.[1] The officers so elected hold their offices for a term of four years. In cities which include wholly within their limits a town or

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 9, p.290. If the act is adopted on, or after the first or third Tuesday in April, the election of mayor and commissioners shall be held on the day of the first biennial general election provided for in the city and villages acts of 1872.

towns, the election shall be held on the first Tuesday in April. All candidates to be voted upon for mayor or commissioner atsuch general municipal elections shall be nominated at a primary election held on the last Tuesday in February next preceding the general municipal election in cities which hold their general election on the first Tuesday in April, and on the first Tuesday in March in cities where the general election occurs on the third Tuesday in April.[1]

Method of nominatinn, ballots, etc.[2] Any person desiring to become a candidate for mayor or commissioner may have his name placed upon the ballot by filing with the city or village clerk or the board of election commissioners, at least fifteen nor more than thirty days prior to the primary election, a petition containing the names of at least twenty-five qualified voters. The form and content of this petition are definitely prescribed in the law. The primary ballot contains the names of all the qualified candidates arranged in alphabetical order; the names of the candidates for mayor appearing at the head of the list followed by those of the commissioners. At the primary election every qualified elector is allowed to vote for one candidate for mayor and for not more than four of the candidates for commissioner. The two candidates for mayor receiving the highest number of votes for that office, and the eight candidates receiving the greatest number of votes for commissioner are the only ones

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1. Revised Statutes Ch.24, sec.193b 12, p. 290-291.
2. Ibid Ch.24, sec.193b 14-19, p. 291-296.

whose names shall appear on the ballot at the general municipal election.[1]

The general municipal election for the choice of mayor and commissioners: The ballot for the general municipal election contains in alphabetical order the names of the two candidates for mayor and the eight candidates for commissioner who received the largest number of votes for their respective positions in the primary. Each qualified elector may vote for one mayoral candidate and for four candidates for commissioner, and the one candidate for mayor and the four for commissioner receiving the highest number of votes are declared elected.[2] Ward lines are thus abolished, and all officers are elected from the city at large.

To prevent corrupt practices at municipal elections provision is made that "any person who shall agree to perform any service in the interest of any candidate for any nomination or election for any office provided in this act, in consideration of any money or other valuable thing, or for the 'treats', for for any appointment to any office or employment under such city or village, for such service performed in the interest of any such candidate, or any candidate who shall make a promise of money or other valuable thing, or to appoint any person to an office in the event of the nomination or election of such candidate, in consideration of such person performing any service in the interest of said candidate ... shall

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 26, p. 294.
2. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 19, p. 295-96.

be subject to a fine not exceeding $300, or be imprisoned in the county jail not exceeding 30 days."[1] Any person offering to give a bribe "either in money or other considerations, or in the form of treating or by agreement to appoint to any office or employment under such city or village to any elector for the purpose of influencing his vote at any election provided for in this act, or any elector entitled to vote at any such election requesting, receiving, or accepting such bribe, money, other consideration or treats, or agreeing to vote or support any candidate in consideration that he be appointed to an office or employment under such city, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be fined a sum not less than $100 or more than $500."[2]

Corruption in elections and official misconduct after election are further guarded against in the prohibition that any officer or employee, who in any manner contributes money, labor, or other valuable thing for election purposes is guilty of misdemeanor and punishable by a fine not exceeding $300, or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days.[3] All officers, assistants and employees in cities adopting the commission form of government, "shall be elected or appointed in accordance with this act, with reference to their qualifications and fitness, and for the good of the public service, and without reference

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1. Revised Statutes Ch.24, sec.193b 20, p. 296.
2. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 21, p. 296.
3. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 37, p. 302.
4. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 38, p. 302.

to their political or religious faith or party affiliations."[1] Any candidate for mayor or commissioner who directly or indirectly enters into any understanding to do or not to do any official act in the event of his election to the benfit of any person, firm, or corporation in consideration for their influence to bring about his election, shall be deemed guilty of bribery and upon conviction fined from $100 to $500, or imprisoned for not more than thirty days. This prohibition, however, shall not be considered as preventing any candidate from publicly outlining his policy, or pledging his support or opposition to any measure or prospective measure of a public nature.[2] The mayor and each commissioner shall within thirty days after election file with the city or village clerk, and publish at least once in a newspaper of local circulation, a sworn statement of the amount of his election and campaign expenses (including the primary election) and by whom such funds were contributed.[3] The statute also makes it necessary that the mayor and commissioners before assuming office, execute sufficient bonds, the amounts of which are to be fixed by the council, and which shall be approved by the judge of the county court. The minimum bond in any city or village, however, is fixed at $5,000.[4] This provision is of advantage in that it tends to raise the quality of the city officials, and eliminates such men as do not have a good standing in the community.

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 38, p. 302.
2. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 38, p. 303.
3. Ibid, Ch. 24, sec.193b 39, p. 302-303.
4. Ibid, Ch. 24, sec.193b 56, p. 310-311.

To prevent undue influence from public service corporations, provision is made that neither the mayor or any commissioner shall be directly or indirectly interested in any such corporation, or in any franchise, or grant conferred by the city; nor shall any person elected as mayor or commissioner have been interested in any such grant or franchise within two years prior to the date of his election. Any mayor or commissioner assuming office subject to these disqualifications is deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and made punishable by a fine of from $1000 or $5000.[1] Such provisions as those described above, although not essentially fundamental to the commission form of government, are valuable safeguards of the public interest, and serve to lessen the temptations for official corruption.

(d) Checks: Having discussed the form of the governing body, its powers, and the mode of election of the mayor and commissioners, the next features to receive consideration are: (1) the various checks for securing popular control; and (2) certain other provisions, the purpose of which is to guarantee more efficient and responsible government. One of the underlying principles of the aldermanic system of government is its embodiment of a system of checks and balances similar to that found in our central and state governments. The general cities and villages act of 1872 provides for a mayor, a council and certain other officers to be elected by the people; and divides the powers of government among the various departments

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 52, p. 309-10.

and organs, with the idea that each will act as a check upon every other.[1] As the functions of municipal government have become more complex and numerous, this principle of checks and balances has contributed largely to make the administration of municipal affairs cumbersome, slow and irresponsible. The Illinois commission form of government law establishes an entirely new class of checks. All power is centralized in the hands of a small governing body of five commissioners, but if this board oversteps its lawful powers, or acts in opposition to public interest, authority to overrule such action and to enforce responsibility is placed where it should be - with the majority of the voters. Such a plan is not only more adequate than the old system, but it makes responsible government more possible of attainment without at the same time sacrificing easy governmental action. The specific methods of popular control provided for in Illinois law are: (1) publicity of proceedings, ordinances, meetings, etc.; (2) the initiative and referendum; (3) the recall; and (4) certain miscellaneous means of control.

(1) Publicity: The publicity features of the Illinois commission form of government are briefly: The requirement that all meetings, regular or special, shall be open to the public;[2] regulations regarding the passage of ordinances; and the requirement that all ordinances, proceedings of the council, and certain financial statements be published for

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1. Revised statutes 1911, Ch.24, Art. I-XIII, p.252-287.
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common distribution.

The council is required to print each month in pamphlet form a summary of its proceedings, as well as a detailed itemized statement of all receipts and expenditures for the preceding month, and furnish copies thereof to the state library, city library, all city newspapers and to any one who may apply for the same. Also at the close of each fiscal year the council shall cause a complete examination of all books and accounts of the municipality to be made by expert accountants, and publish the result of such audit in the manner prescribed for the publication of monthly accounts.[1] Valuable as these provisions are in furnishing the citizens with information regarding the affairs of municipal government, they do not make it certain that such information will be adequate to equip them to rule with intelligence; for as Mr. Henry Bruere states, "Commission government will not bring about intelligent popular rule until it consciously aims to make citizens intelligent regarding their common business".[2] From the standpoint of securing efficient and uniform financial accounts as a basis for popular information, the Illinois commission form of government law is inadequate. It merely states in general terms that certain reports and financial statements be published, but does not prescribe how such accounts shall be kept, or the manner in which the same shall be presented to the public. As will be noted later, the methods

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 40, p. 303.
2. Mr. Henry Bruere "The New City Government", p. 130.

of municipal accounting and reporting in commission government cities vary widely, and in some cities the annual auditor's report is nothing more than a brief and general statement, with no attempt to analyze or describe fully the financial transactions of the city. The statute should require that some distinction be made in the monthly and annual financial reports between current revenues and expenses and total receipts and expenditures, that revenues and expenditures be classified according to their purpose and sources, and that a balance sheet be drawn up, which will present a picture of all financial transactions.

The second important publicity feature of the commission form of government law is the requirement that any ordinance appropriating money, ordering any improvement, making any contract, or granting any franchise shall remain on file with the city clerk at least one week before the final passage thereof.[1] Such a provision not only safeguards the public interests and prevents corrupt action, but also makes it possible for the interested citizen to become informed regarding the activities of the city council, and allows sufficient time for the filing of popular complaints or petitions. This leads us to a discussion of the second group of "checks" - the referendum, the initiative and the recall.

(2) The Referendum:[2] Popular control over the granting

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1. Revised Statutes 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 33, p. 300.
2. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 48-49, p. 308, also sec.193b 34-36, p. 301.

of franchises is made possible by that provision of the law which requires that all proposed franchises "for the use of the streets, alleys, highways ... and other public places , for aerial way, interurban, suburban, subway, or street railways, gas, waterworks, electric light, power plants, heating plants, telegraphs, telephone systems or other public service utilities within said city or village, must be authorized or approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon at a general or special election."[1] The referendum is compulsory in the case of franchises, which to be valid must be approved by a majority vote of the qualified voters voting at the election thereon.

The conditional referendum is provided for, in that any ordinance passed by the council may be submitted to a popular vote upon the petition of a certain per centage of electors. No ordinance adopted by the council, except a measure for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, containing a statement of its urgency and passed by a two-thirds vote of the council, shall go into effect before thirty days from its final passage. If during the period a petition signed by at least ten per cent of the entire vote cast for all candidates for mayor at the last preceding general municipal election, protesting against the passage of such ordinance, is presented to the council, the same shall be suspended from going into operation, and it shall be the duty of the council to reconsider such ordinance.

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1. Revised Statutes, 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 34, p. 301.

If upon recommendation the ordinance is not repealed, the council shall submit the same to a vote of the people at either a general or a special election to be called for that purpose, and the ordinance shall not go into effect until approved by a majority of the electors voting at the election thereon.[1]

(3) The Initiative:[2] The referendum and petition of protest, although valuable safeguards of public interests, are in truth negative checks, and can be used only to prevent ill-judged or unwise action on the part of the governing body of the municipality. Through the initiative the people living in commission government cities are provided with a positive means of securing the adoption of desired legislation, in case the council is inactive or refuses to adopt a policy favored by a majority of the citizens. Any proposed ordinance may be submitted to the council by a petition containing the signatures of a certain percentage of the voters. Two alternative plans are provided for the popular initiation of legislation. If the petition accompanying the proposed ordinance is signed by electors equal in number to twenty-five per cent of the vote cast for all candidates for mayor at the last preceding municipal election, and contains a request that the ordinance be submitted to a vote of the people if not passed by the council, that body shall either: (a) pass such

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 48-49, p. 308.
2. See Ibid Ch.24, sec.193b 47, p. 306-307.

ordinance without alteration within thirty days, or (b) after the expiration of thirty days call a special election (unless a general election occurs within ninety days), at which the ordinance shall be presented to the voters without alteration. But if the petition is signed by not less than ten per cent nor more than twenty-five per cent of the electors, then the council shall within thirty days pass the ordinance without alteration, or submit it at the next general municipal election occurring not more than ninety days after the filing of the same. If a majority of the qualified electors voting on the proposed ordinance register their will in favor thereof, it shall become a valid and binding ordinance, and any ordinance proposed by petition or adopted by a vote of the people cannot be repealed or amended except by a popular vote. Any number of proposed ordinances may be voted upon at a single election, but there shall not be more than one special election in any six months for such purpose alone. The council may submit a proposition for the repeal or amendment of any ordinance at any succeeding city election, and a majority of all votes cast shall determine whether it will be so repealed or amended. The city or village clerk is required to cause all propositions or ordinances submitted at the election to be published at least once in each of the daily or weekly newspapers of the city, or by the posting of public notices not more than twenty or less then five days before submission.[1]

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1. Revised Statues, 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 97, p. 306-307.

(4) The Recall:[1] While the initiative and referendum furnish methods of popular control over legislation, the recall in theory provides a check upon administrative misconduct and inefficiency, and is embodied in the law presumably for the purpose of offsetting any danger which might arise from the concentration of power in the hands of a few men. The Illinois commission government law as originally adopted practically made the recall petition a "dead letter" by providing that a recall petition must contain the signature of at least seventy-five per cent of the electors voting for mayor at the last general election.[2] By an amendment of 1911 the percentage was fixed as fifty-five.[3] The question as to what number of signatures should be required for an effective use of the recall is a proposition to which it is difficult to give a definite answer. The recall has never been put into actual use in Illinois, and has been seriously threatened on only two occasions. One is warranted in saying, however, that so high a percentage as fifty-five makes the Illinois recall nugatory and impracticable except perhaps in extreme cases of corruption or inefficiency.

Every incumbent of an elective office, except a judicial office, is subject to recall and removal at any time by the electors qualified to vote for a successor of such incumbent. The procedure is as follows: whenever it is desired to recall a mayor or commissioner, a petition signed

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1. Revised Statutes, 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 42-46, p.303-306.
2. Laws of Illinois, Special Session 1909-10, p.31.
3. Revised Statutes, 1911, Ch.24, sec.42(a), p.303.

by electors equal in number to at least fifty-five per cent of the entire vote for all candidates for the office of mayor at the last municipal election demanding an election of a successor to the person sought to be recalled, shall be filed with the village or city clerk. This petition shall contain in a general statement of not more than two hundred words the grounds upon which the recall is sought. As a protection against false signatures the law prescribes a definite form of petition, and provides that at the bottom of each sheet there shall be a sworn statement by some elector that the signatures contained thereon were placed there in his presence, and that to the best of his knowledge the signatures are genuine and the persons so signing are duly registered.[1] All objections to the recall petition must be presented to the city or village clerk within five days after the filing of the same, and the petition with all objections must at the expiration of five days be filed with the clerk of the circuit or county court. The court, or the judge as the case may be, shall within at least ten days, and after giving five days notice of a hearing, decide in a summary manner, finally and without appeal, the sufficiency of the recall petition. If no objections are entered against the petition, or if the sufficiency thereof is upheld by the judge or court of the county or circuit, the city or village clerk after the expiration of five days or immediately upon the receipt of the judicial decree shall transmit such petition to the council,

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1. Revised Statutes, 1911, Ch.24, sec.193b 42(b); p.303-4.

and the council shall call an election not less than forty or more than fifty days after the submission of the same.[1]

When a recall election is called, a special primary is held two weeks prior, at which the person receiving the highest number of votes is declared the nominee to oppose the present incumbent. The person sought to be recalled is a candidate to succeed himself unless he resigns, and his name is placed on the official ballot without nomination. If at the special election some other person than the incumbent receives the largest number of votes, the latter shall be deemed removed upon the qualification of his successor. No recall petition, however, can be filed against any office until he has actually been in office for at least twelve months, and no person who has been recalled, or who has resigned while recall proceedings are pending, shall be appointed or elected to any office within one year.[2]

There are several points of weakness in the recall provisions of the Illinois commission government statute. Not only is the percentage of signatures necessary for a recall petition too high for practical use, but the clause requiring a statement upon which a recall is sought is too general. The percentage should be decreased to at least twenty-five, and the law so amended as to require that all charges against an officer be sworn to publicly by a certain number of competent persons. Such changes would make the

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 42, p.305-306.
2. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 46, p.306.

recall of real practical value, prevent the circulation of recall petitions "in the dark", and lessen the possibility of its being used as an instrument of spitework.

(e) Miscellaneous provisions to secure popular control and an honest and responsible administration of municipal affairs: In addition to the above mentioned checks, the commission government statute contains certain other stipulations, the purpose of which is to prevent official corruption and to eliminate the undue influence of public service corporations. The mayor, commissioners, and employees of the municipality are prohibited from being interested directly or indirectly in any contract for work, for material, or services to be furnished or performed for the city. Neither may such officer have an interest in any contract for similar work or services to be furnished for any firm or corporation operating any interurban street railway, gas works, electric light plant, telephone system or other public utility within the city.[1] Further limitations prohibit officers and employees from accepting free transportation or service from public utilities companies.[2]

The Illinois commission government statute does not provide any plan for the municipal ownership of public utilities, or any very definite method of exercising public control over the same. There are, however, certain general provisions which grant to the mayor and commissioners a slight power of supervision over public service corporations. Every

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 37, p. 301-302.
2. Ibid, sec.193b 37, p. 302.

public utilities corporation is required to furnish equal and uniform service, and it is made unlawful and sufficient ground for the forfeiture of its franchise for any corporation to offer free service, or better service, or at a lower price, or in any other manner to discriminate in the matter of rates and services. Upon proof of the violation of this section, the council is authorized to summon witnesses and to make investigations, and if it is decided that there has been a violation of the same it shall be their duty to bring suit immediately to have the franchise forfeited. Exceptions to this prohibition can be made by the city in the original franchise ordinance, and the council may authorize any street railway company to give free transportation to the uniformed police and fire force.[1] The council is given the further power to make regulations for the inspection of all plants and machinery of any person or public service corporation operating under a franchise from the city. They also have the right to make all necessary examinations of any plant, appliance, or apparatus for the purpose of determining whether such person or corporation has complied with the regulations of the council regarding the quality and character of the commodity furnished. The council is given in general terms the authority to specify, determine, and regulate the quality and character of gas and electricity furnished to it or to its citizens.[2]

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1. Revised Statutes, ch.24, sec.193b 50, p. 308-9.
2. Ibid, sec.193b 52, p. 310.

Closely connected with these various features, the purpose of which is to safeguard the public welfare and to secure efficient government, are certain stipulations to protect the administration of the city's finances. To prevent the overdrawing of appropriations which has been so common under the aldermanic system, the commission form of government statute makes it unlawful and punishable by a fine for any mayor or commissioner to expend a greater amount than that appropriated for the particular purpose in the annual appropriation ordinance.[1] The city treasurer is required to make daily deposits of all moneys received by him in one or more banks to be selected by the mayor, the commissioner of accounts and finance, and the city treasurer. Any bank selected as a depository of the municipal funds must agree to pay interest on the monthly balances of the same at a rate of not less than three per cent per annum. All interest so paid is considered a part of the revenues of the general fund, and may be used for any legitimate municipal purpose.[2] All contracts involving an outlay of as much as $500 must be made by competitive bidding, upon specifications approved by the council.[3] These provisions, while not essential to commission government, undoubtedly add to its efficiency, and go a long way in making government by commission a success.

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1. Revised Statutes, Ch.24, sec.193b 40, p.303.
2. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 51, p. 309.
3. Ibid, Ch.24, sec.193b 54, p. 310.

Summary

With the broad development and increase in the functions to be performed by a city government, the work of municipal authorities has become business-like in character. The Illinois commission government law recognizes the principle that business methods should be applied to municipal administration, and provides a system of city government that is much more simple, direct, and business-like than the aldermanic plan. All authority and responsibility are placed within the same body, and all the functions of government are unified and consolidated in a small board of five commissioners. In the words of Professor Clinton R. Woodruff: "A concise, easily understood frame of government takes the place of a complicated one, and what is worse still, a long series of conflicting, overlapping, often antiquated acts of assembly."[1] The commission form thus disregards the time-honored principle of the separation of powers, and by so doing eliminates that scattering of duties, responsibilities, and functions which was so common under the aldermanic plan. A small governing body is given the numerous powers which were formerly apportioned among the mayor, the alderman, and the various officers elected independently of the council. Under the aldermanic system the council is essentially a legislative body, and its oversight over the administrative activities is loose and irresponsible. For the large council elected from wards, the "over-burdened mayor", and the

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1. Clinton R. Woodruff, "City Government by Commission", p.21.

irresponsible elective heads of departments, the Illinois commission government plan substitutes five men elected from the city at large, who pass all ordinances, appoint the principal department heads, determine their functions and duties, and supervise the general administration of municipal affairs.

Not only are all the powers of government centralized in a small commission, but each member of that body is assigned to a separate department over which he exercises a close administrative oversight, and for the conduct of which he is personally responsible both to the council and to the people. All heads of departments and assistants are chosen by the council, thus closing the gap which exists under the aldermanic system between that body and the independently elected officers. The commission form of government by constituting each member of the board the head of a particular department, and by making all other officials appointive instead of elective, provides for correlation between the governing body and the various departments; while the powers of the commission-council are increased so as to give it authority, not only to determine the policies of government, but to see that such policies are carried out by subordinates selected and removable by it.

The more perfect the form of government, the more possible is it to obtain efficient government; but in the last analysis the success of any plan of government depends upon the men who administer it. The Illinois plan of com-

mission government, not only secures the elimination of politics through non-partisan primaries and elections, but the number to be elected is so small that the attention of the voter may be centered upon each candidate. The mayor and commissioners are elected from the city at large without reference to wards, the salaries are made larger, and the dignity of office increased.

Popular control is secured, responsiblity enforced, and the concentration of too much power in the hands of a small number of men safeguarded by the initiative, the referendum, and the publicity features of the law. Commission government is, therefore, not only a simple and business-like system for the administration of municipal affairs, but it is also a popular system for the administration of municipal affairs.

Having considered the form of government embodied in the Illinois commission government law, and its merits as a new departure in the field of political theory, let us now direct our attention to the actual results obtained under it.

Chapter II

Commission Government Adopted in Twenty-four Cities

During the fall and winter of 1910-11 a number of Illinois cities began a campaign for the adoption of commission government, and in the late winter of 1911 the new system was established in sixteen cities and one village. In 1912-13, the commission form was adopted in nine other municipalities, so that today there are twenty-four cities and two villages operating under commission government, representing a total population of 299,743. The following is a list of commission governed cities in Illinois, with the population of each, the date of adoption, and the date of the general election of mayor and commissioners:

Cities Adopting Commission Form in 1911

City	Population	Date of Operation
Carbondale	5411	April, 1911
Clinton	5165	" "
Decatur	31,140	" "
Dixon	7,216	" "
Elgin	25,978	" "
Hillsboro	3,424	" "
Jacksonville	15,326	" "
Kewanee	9,307	" "
Moline	24,199	" "
Ottawa	9,535	" "
Pekin	9,897	" "

City	Population	Date of Operation
Rochelle	2,732	April, 1911
Rock Island	24,335	" "
Springfield	51,678	" "
Spring Valley	7,835	" "
Waukegan	16,069	" "

Villages Adopting Commission Form 1911

Village	Population	Date of Operation
Braceville	971	April, 1911
Forest Park	6,592	" 1913*

Cities Adopting Commission Form in 1913

City	Population	Date of Operation
Cairo	14,548	April, 1913
Hamilton	1,627	" "
Harrisburg	5,309	" "
Harvey	7,227	" "
Marseilles	3,291	" "
Murphysboro	7,485	" "
Naperville	3,449	" "

Villages Adopting Commission Form 1913

Village	Population	Date of Operation
Port Byron	642	April,1913

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1. Forest Park adopted Commission Government in November 1911, but did not begin operation under the new plan until April, 1913.

Cities Defeating the Proposition

Some twenty cities have defeated the proposition, including Bloomington, Champaign, Danville, Galesburg, Greenville, Joliet, Monmouth, Lincoln, Peoria, Quincy, Rockford, Savannah, Shelbyville, Sterling, Sullivan, White Hall, Virginia and Urbana.[1] Champaign, Joliet and Taylorville have twice defeated the proposition of adopting commission government. In Bloomington the aldermanic system was giving a fair degree of satisfaction, the city was enjoying a good business administration, and the people did not feel the necessity of a change. A large number of citizens regarded commission government as an experiment, and preferred to view its operation in other cities before adopting it themselves.[2] In Joliet the commission government plan was defeated first in Jaunary 1911 by a majority of 670 votes, and two years later (January 1913) by a majority of 104. On both occasions defeat was due in large measure to the opposition of the liquor interests.[3] In Lincoln the principal cause of defeat was the lack of interest on the part of the better class of citizens.[4] The secretary of the Peoria Association of Commerce writes that commission government was voted down in that city because

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1. Chas. A. Beard, "Digest of Short Ballot Charters". Also letters from citizens, city clerks, etc.
2. Letter from T. S. Brown, acting secretary, Bloomington Business Mens Assn., May 29, 1911.
3. Council Proceedings, Joliet, Ill., Jun., 29, 1913; also letter from Mr. J. L. White, Atty., April, 12, 1913.
4. See Streator Daily Independent-Times, Feb., 13, 1913.

the "new system had not had sufficient time to prove its rights to supersede the existing form of municipal rule, and because the scheme as proposed was loaded down with conditions relating to the initiative, referendum, and recall which in the opinion of many good people are pernicious, extreme, and subversive of government by representation."[1] The citizens of Quincy rejected commission government because the movement was so new to a majority of the people that they did not understand it. The liquor interests and the administration led the opposition, and were thoroughly organized and provided with ample funds for carrying on a vigorous campaign.[2] Taylorville voted against the commission form in March 1911, and a gain in March 1913. The combined liquor interests, professional politicians, and local officeholders composed the opposition, and the better class of citizens could not be aroused to take an active interest. In 1911 both of the leading newspapers supported the proposition, while in the later campaign only one upheld its adoption.[3]

Commission government was defeated in Champaign in 1911 because of the organized opposition of the liberal element, the professional politicians, and the local office-holders. In 1913 no campaign was carried on, in the belief that such a

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1. Communication from Mr. Chas. E. Wheeler, Secretary Peoria Association of Commerce, May 31, 1911.
2. Communication from Mr. C. F. Perry, Secretary Quincy Chamber of Commerce, June 2, 1911.
3. Communication from Mr. Raylor, Attorney, Taylorville, Illinois.

policy would result in a minimum of opposition. The actual result was that the best class of citizens took very little interest, a small vote was polled, and the proposition was defeated. In Urbana the liberal element was against the commission form, and certain other conditions threw the balance in favor of the opposition. The Illinois commission government law provides that no person, who is directly or indirectly interested in any public service corporation operating under a grant form from the city, may serve as mayor or commissioner. The fact that practically all of the leading citizens of Urbana owned stock in the Urbana and Kankakee Railway Company was advanced as an argument against commission government, and was sufficient to bring about the rejection of the plan.

> Commission government in the cities of Springfield, Decatur, Elgin, Rock Island, Moline, Waukegan, Jacksonville, Pekin, Ottawa, Kewanee, Carbondale, Spring Valley and Hillsboro, and in the village of Braceville.

The cities of Springfield, Decatur, Elgin, Rock Island, Moline, Waukegan, Jacksonville, Pekin, Ottawa, Kewanee, Carbondale and Spring Valley, and the village of Braceville have been made the basis of the following survey of commission government in Illinois. The cities of Dixon, Clinton, Hillsboro and Rochelle have been omitted because of lack of material, while commission government has been in operation for too short a period in Cairo, Harrisburg, Harvey, Hamilton, Forest Park, Murphysboro, Naperville, Marseilles

and Port Byron to warrant a detailed consideration of its workings in those municipalities.[1] Municipal conditions in Springfield ha e been given greater attention because it is the largest city in the state organized under the new plan, and because a detailed and specialized description of the workings of the system in that city will perhaps lead to a more comprehensive notion of the advantages and limitations of commission commission government in Illinois cities.

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1. Commission government went into effect in these cities in May 1, 1913.

Chapter III

Commission Government in Springfield

Springfield, the state capital of Illinois, with a population of 51,678, is the fourth city in size in the state, and is located in the central part of one of the richest agricultural and mining districts of the middle west.[1] Within the past decade a number of coal mines have been opened, new factories started, and scores of business buildings and residences erected. Property values increased steadily during this period, and there was a good demand for labor. In spite of this material prosperity, a feeling prevailed that the city government was extravagant and inefficient, that the public utility corporations controlled municipal affairs, and that public gambling and vice were altogether too common.[2] The streets were cleaned only on the week before election when a large force of men was employed in order to secure votes; the waterworks department was, as one of the city officials designated it, "a watering trough for the politicians"; the city's credit was bad; and supplies could be purchased only at a high figure. The banks finally refused to advance money to the city. City officials made away with the money of the city, and special assessments were covered up by the collectors so

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2. Communication from S. S. Breese - ex-commissioner of the Springfield Civil Service Commission.

3. Communication from S. S. Breese.

as to secure a compensation far in excess of the maximum allowed by law.[1] The waterworks during the period from 1900 to 1909 was allowed to deteriorate until the water supply was very deficient and impure.[2]

Springfield as the seat of the state capital is naturally subject to the various political influences found at such centers of public life. Each of the national parties has been divided locally into two groups - the Democrats into a Roger Sullivan and a Bryan faction, the Republicans into a Lorimer and an anti-Lorimer or Deneen faction. Local matters, and the election of city officials, were formerly determined upon the basis of such an alignment. The brewery and saloon elements dominated the city government and tribute money was said to have been received by the police officers for "immunity". Although in no worse a condition than the average American city of the same size, Springfield was graft-ridden and ill-governed.[3]

In July 1908 the city council extended the street railway franchise for twenty years in direct contradiction to the demand of a public policy ballot that the franchise be submitted to a popular vote. This disregard for the will of the electorate aroused a strong feeling against the city government. In August of the same year occurred the race

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1. Report of Arthur Young Auditing Company, 1911.
2. Illinois State Register July 30, 1911. (An account of Commissioner Spaulding's Report to the Commissioners).
3. Communication from S. S. Breese.

riots which in reality were due to official mismanagement, and were the direct results of the exploitation of the negro vote by the practical politician.[1]

In 1909 Springfield experienced a change in the municipal administration. John S. Schnepp (the present mayor), a prominent real-estate man, and a person somewhat above the average type of local office holder, was elected mayor.[2] More efficient men were appointed as heads of the various departments, and the influence of politics was reduced somewhat by the introduction and extension of civil service rules. The administration of the city's business was carried on in a more efficient manner, graft was eliminated and the debt of the city decreased by about $200,000.[3] Public gambling and the worst forms of vice were suppressed by the police. Mr. Schnepp was recognized by all as a "reform mayor", and from the standpoint of efficient administration the city was progressing.

Willis J. Spaulding, the present commissioner of Public Property was made superintendent of waterworks in 1909, and succeeded in eliminating politics from his department, and in placing the waterworks upon a paying basis. The results of Mr. Spaulding's work are shown by the fact that in the year ending February 28, 1911, the operating expenses of the waterworks were reduced from $50,622.94 to $37,124.01, or a saving

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1. Communication from S. S. Breese
2. Ibid.
3.

of $12,497.93. The total cost per million gallons pumped was decreased from $81 in 1910 to $63.63 in 1911, a decrease of $17.37. The earnings for 1911, after deducting operating expenses, depreciation, interest and taxes were $64,990.15 as against $49,212.79 for the previous year.[1] The galleries were extended so as to increase the daily water supply by about one half a million of gallons, two new boilers were installed and the contract let for a new boiler and pump room.[2] Mr. Spaulding's work under the aldermanic form is testimony not only of the fact that efficiency can be secured despite the form of government, "when men hold their positions on merit and are not treated as political lackeys,"[3] but also of the error of the statement so often heard that it is impossible to maintain a waterworks system economically under public ownership and management. The mayor and his subordinate administrative officers were hindered, however, in their attempt to give the city a better government by the city council, a majority of which was opposed to the mayor in politics. For instance the mayor would revoke a saloon license for the most flagrant violation of the law, and the council would reissue the same, thus overridingthe mayor's action.[4] The board of aldermen was also backward in giving

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1. Annual Report of Waterworks Department, 1911, p.4.
2. Ibid p 4.
3. Ibid p 1.
4. Special communication from S. S. Breese.

aid to the waterworks department, and in providing for improvements. Very plainly some change in the city government was necessary to remedy these abuses.

On November 14, 1910, a petition was presented to the county judge, asking that the question of adopting the commission form of government be submitted to a vote of the people. The advocates of the new system secured speakers from commission governed cities, held frequent meetings, and provided the citizens with the fullest information possible. Two of the city newspapers gave their heartiest support to the proposition, one was strongly against it, and a fourth was neutral. The saloon interests were especially strong in their opposition to the measure, as were also the professional politicians. The proposition carried, however, and on January 2, 1911, commission government was adopted in the city of Springfield by a majority of 670 votes.[1]

At the primary election on February 29, 1911, there were 105 candidates for commissioner and five for mayor, making a total of 110. Eight of the fourteen aldermen were candidates for commissioner, and among the mayoralty candidates were the mayor, the city attorney, and the president of the Board of Election Commissioners. Mr. John S. Schnepp, Mayor, and Mr. Roy M. Seeley, City Attorney, were nominated for Mayor, while for commissioners there were nominated Mr. Joseph

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1. Communication from Mr. S. S. Breese (Atty. Springfield).

Farris, an ex-alderman with a good record, Mr. George E. Coe, a commission merchant, who had never before taken any active part in politics; Mr. Frank L. Hatch, ex-State Attorney; Mr. Henry B. Davidson, a dealer in carriages and wagons; Mr. Frank H. Hamilton, City Engineer; Mr. Roy R. Reece, ex-Mayor, Mr. J. E. Smith, City Clerk, and Mr. Willis J. Spaulding, Superintendent of the waterworks. Thus it is seen that there were only two men nominated, who had never before held a public office.[1]

Personnel of the Springfield Commission.

One of the most noticeable features of the campaign for the election of the mayor and commissioners was the great awakening of public interest and civic responsibility among the citizens. The very size of the total vote cast for mayor under the commission form (10,661 or eighty-two per cent of the total number of registered voters) is an indication of the extent to which the people of Springfield were interested.[2] The efforts of the best class of citizens was centered upon defeating the "old gang" by a non-partisan election.[3] Two tickets were put into the field. One of these, the so-called Citizens ticket was non-partisan in nature and included a candidate for mayor and five candidates

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1. Communication from Mr. S. S. Breese (Atty. Springfield).
2. Illinois State Journal, April 5, 1911.
3. Ibid, April 1, 1911; Illinois State Register, April 2, 1911, April 4, 1911.

for commissioners. The other ticket supported by the Sullivan-Lorimer forces and the liquor interests advocated the election of one candidate for mayor and three for the position of commissioner. The latter candidates belonged to that class of practical politicians which had controlled the government during past years. The repudiated park-board combine, the caucus manipulators, the brewery interests, and the Lorimer forces, were unhappy because of the adoption of the commission form, and fearing it would put an end to gang politics, sought to control the new system by securing the election of their candidates.[1] The two leading newspapers of the city gave their support to the Citizens ticket.[2] Public meetings were held by both sides, and the candidates appealed to the voters through the press. In this way the voters were thoroughly informed regarding the qualifications of the various candidates and were made to feel the responsibility that rested upon them. At a non-partisan mass-meeting on the night before the election, partisan politics in city affairs were strongly denounced, and attacks were made upon corruption in public life. Prominent citizens, who heretofore hadtaken very little interest in city affairs, were present at this meeting.[3] The effect of the campaign was naturally the creation of a public interest and the education of the people in active citizenship.

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1. Illinois State Register, April 2, 1911; Illinois State Journal, April 4, 1911.
2. Illinois State Register, and Illinois State Journal (Democratic and Republican respectively).
3. Illinois State Register, April 4, 1911.

As a result of the election held on April 2, 1911, the candidate for mayor and three of the candidates for commissioners on the Citizens ticket were elected. Only one of the men supported by the "old gang" was successful, and his election was due to personal popularity, and to his rather efficient record as a public servant. A total vote of 10,661 was cast for mayor, a much larger vote than is usually polled at municipal elections in Springfield.[1] The returns of the election were sufficient to show that the Lorimer-Sullivan machine has been broken up by an "indignant popular uprising." (Two of the commissioners are Republican, two are Democratic, and one an Independent.)

Candidates for Mayor	Votes
Schnepp (citizens ticket)	6786
Seeley ("old machine" ticket)	3875
Schnepp's plurality	2911
Candidates for Commissioners	
Davidson (citizens ticket)	5980
Hamilton ("machine" ticket)	5967
Spaulding (citizens ticket)	4887
Coe (citizens ticket)	4886
Reece ("machine" ticket)	4632
Smith ("machine" ticket)	4500
Farris (citizens ticket)	4423
Hatch (citizens ticket)	4076

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1. Illinois State Register, April 5, 1911; Illinois State Journal, April 5, 1911.

One of the claims commonly made for commission form of government is that through the concentration of authority, the non-partisan primary, and the consequent increase in the dignity of the office, men of a new and higher type will be attracted to public office. To some extent this has been the experience in Springfield. Three of the men elected had been office-holders under the previous administration and one was an ex-member of the school-board.[1] These men were drawn, however, from the better class of city office-holders - a class which under the aldermanic form was decidedly in the minority. The mayor (John S. Schnepp) had been mayor under the aldermanic form, and his administration was regarded as the best the city had enjoyed for twenty years.[2] He is a lawyer and also one of the most prominent real estate men in the city. From the standpoint of business experience and executive ability, the mayor is well qualified for his position. Although elected upon his reputation as having given Springfield the best administration in twenty years, the mayor has not lived up to expectations. He has not given as much attention to the government of the city as might be expected. The other commissioners complain that the mayor does not devote more than three or four hours daily to the business of the city, and that he is too deeply engrossed in his own enterprises. There are several explanations for the apparent

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1. Mayor Schnepp,(mayor); Commissioner Spaulding (Supt.of water works); Commissioner Hamilton (city engineer); and Commissioner Davidson (ex-member of School Board).
2. Illinois State Register , April 1, 1911.

inactivity. First in importance is the fact that the mayor, who has no more authority than any of the other commissioners, feels the loss of the power once possessed by him under the aldermanic form. Secondly, the work of the department assigned to him does not offer such opportunities for organizing ability and executive skill, as do the Departments of Accounts and Finance, Public Health and Safety, Public Works, or the Department of Streets and Public Improvements. The attitude of the mayor toward his position, together with his liberal ideas as to liquor regulation have placed him in a minority in the commission.

The commissioner receiving the highest number of votes (Henry B. Davidson, the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety) is by occupation a dealer in carriages and wagons, and a former member of the school-board.[1] Mr. Davidson takes as deep an interest in his department as he would in his private business and has introduced a number of reforms.

The commissioner receiving the second highest number of votes, Frank. H. Hamilton, the present commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, had been for fifteen years the city engineer and was the only candidate elected who had received support from the "machine".[2] Although technically qualified for his position, the Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements is not a man of great aggressiveness. Being somewhat conservative, he has aligned himself with the mayor in forming the minority in the council.

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1. Communication from S. S. Breese.
2. Ibid.

Of the other two candidates, one, Willis J. Spaulding, was superintendent of the city waterworks at the time of the election, and was assigned to the Department of Public Property upon the organization of the government.[1] Elected upon the reputation of having placed the waterworks system upon a paying basis, Commissioner Spaulding has continued the improvement of his department, and has been successful in securing more efficient service from a plant which is inadequate to meet the needs of the city.

The remaining commissioner, George E. Coe, (Commissioner of Accounts and Finance) is a commission merchant, and has never before held a public office. Commissioner Coe has been rather successful in reorganizing the finances of the city, and possesses the confidence of most of the bankers and business men. He is also a strong anti-saloon man.[2] Commissioner Coe and Spaulding are men of decided opinions and ideals, and appear to have an exaggerated notion of their personal importance and of the importance of their particular departments.

As expressed by Mr. Bender, editor of the Springfield Evening News, "Springfield was fortunate in the selection of several of its present commissioners, less so in the election of others. But the average of the personnel is

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1. Communication from S. S. Breese.
2.

beyond doubt above the average of councils as they have been chosen in the past." Mr. E. L. Chapin, a prominent attorney, writes that under the aldermanic form "in a large number of instances the aldermen were nominated, elected and controlled by the "ward heelers", and consequently it was common to find saloon keepers, and bar tenders, and worse among the so-called city fathers. In many instances they were men without standing in the community, failures in any line of private business but certain that they were qualified to take care of the interests of fifty thousand people."[1] The present commissioners are average citizens, and on the whole far above the average type of aldermen; they are honest and it has been impossible to purchase their favor with promises of money or patronage. Yet there is a certain weakness in the Springfield commission which has injured the cause of commission government in that city, and which has led some prominent citizens to say that the commission form is a failure, and that if put to a vote of the people it would be defeated. The men elected as commissioners are of varying temperaments, ideas and personalities. Two of them favor a liberal policy, while the other three advocate a fairly strict enforcement of saloon regulations, Sunday closing, the restriction of disorderly houses, etc. This alignment manifested itself in the discussion of the proposed liquor

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1. Communication from Mr. E. S. Chapin (Atty.), Dec.30, 1912.

ordinances in the summer of 1911. The commissioners could not come to any satisfactory agreement among themselves as to the policy of regulating Sunday closing and the saloon business, the matter was presented to a popular vote, and the action of the council was repudiated by a large majority. The commissioners clashed in the matter of appointments, and only one appointment was unanimous. Next came the proposition of erecting a new municipal building. Many citizens have come to feel that Springfield could be made the meeting place for state conventions if proper quarters were provided. This belief led to a popular agitation in favor of a convention hall, and an appropriation of $75,000 was made for this purpose in the budget for 1912. At first the question of expense caused a difference of opinion; then came a long discussion as to where the proposed building should be located, and whether it should be a municipal hall or a convention building. Several commissioners favored an addition to the present city hall; others wanted a convention hall; some wished to erect the structure near the old city building; others desired to place it in the ~~western~~ northern part of the business district. Agreement was impossible, and the commissioners found it necessary to present the matter to a vote of the people for decision. One commissioner was expecially aggressive in upholding his opinion in the convention hall controversy, and carried his cause into the newspapers.

Then, too, the commissioners have fought among themselves, and their relations have been anything but harmonious. Several members of the majority faction in the commis-

sion council have attacked the mayor through the press and platform, and often it has seemed as though both sides were resorting to "grand-stand play." This same element of friction and lack of administrative coördination exists also in the subordinate municipal service, where it is not unusual to find some minor official criticizing and attacking the policy of his superior. In fact each commissioner has endeavored to make himself supreme and independent in his department, or as one citizen expressed it "to be a little czar." Consequently, he has acquired an exaggerated notion of the importance of his particular division, and has resented any movement which has had the appearance of interference.

With the council divided among itself as is that in Springfield, and with each commissioner trying to maintain an independent position, it is almost inevitable that popular criticism and opposition should be common, and that the efficiency of the administration should be impaired. Such a state of affairs has not only placed difficulties in the way or progressive reform, but has given the city and the commission notoriety of an unpopular character, and has aroused the opposition of many citizens who would otherwise be kindly disposed toward the present city government. On the other hand, there is perhaps a slight advantage in such a condition. Under certain circumstances where each commissioner is watching every other and is prepared at any time to assail his action, combination and collusions are almost impossible, and the

activities of the commissioners are kept continually before the public. But there is no doubt that the disadvantages of such a situation are greater than the advantages, and one cannot help but feel that the government would be more efficient and the moral tone of the city bettered if the commissioners worked together in harmony. In other words would it not be more practicable in a city such as Springfield to have a small legislative body and one executive officer elected by the people at large, the latter of which should be the administrative head of the city government and who should appoint all the subordinate officers, and be centrally and directly responsible for the conduct of the city's business?

Organization of Municipal Government under Commission Form.

On April 17, 1911, the commissioners held their first regular meeting and organized.[1] The commissioners met around a table in the center of the council chamber; there were no serious hitches in the proceedings and all action were unanimous. The business before the body was transacted and the commission adjourned in thirty minutes.[2] The business-like method of procedure, depatch and apparent harmony were in contrast to, and emphasize the transition from the amateurish and stormy character of the meetings under the aldermanic form.

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1. Proceedings of the Council for April, 1911. p.3.
2. Illinois State Register, April 18, 1911.

At this meeting an ordinance was passed assigning the commissioners elected to the various departments as provided by the State law, and another distributing the administrative and executive power of the city government.[1] The provisions of this latter ordinance are interesting as illustrating the methods followed in such division, and will be helpful in securing a proper understanding of the workings of the commission form in Springfield.

The mayor was assigned to the Department of Public Affairs, and according to the provisions of the State law given general supervision over all departments and officers of the city. It is his duty to sign all contracts on behalf of the city, and require all statements required by law and ordinance to be prepared and published.* The mayor (as commissioner of Public Affairs) in Springfield has under his direct control the corporation counsel, the city attorney and other employees of the legal department; the city library, library directors and employees, the civil service commission; the Oak Ridge cemetery; the city comptroller and such miscellaneous officials as gas and meter inspector, city weigher, inspector of weights and measures, and oil inspector.[2]

The Commissioner of Accounts and Finances ~~has~~

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1. Proceedings of the Council for April 1911, p.3.
2. Illinois State Register, April 18, 1911; Illinois State Journal April 18, 1911.

* He is also given the power to issue and revoke liquor licenses subject to confirmation by the council.

has supervision over all accounts and records of the city; and over all boards, officers, or departments required to keep records and accounts. He shall also inspect all records and accounts required to be kept, and shall at least once a month report the result with such recommendations as he sees fit; he shall have charge and supervision over the purchase and distribution of all supplies, and is the purchasing agent of the city. The commissioner of accounts and finance shall examine and report to the council upon all the bills, accounts and claims before they are acted upon. The city clerk, city treasurer, and all bookkeepers and accountants except those in the office of the comptroller, collector of water rates and the waterworks department are under his direction. The commissioner of accounts and finance shall also require from the public utility companies such statements and reports as they are required to make, and cause to be collected all license fees, franchise taxes, rentals or other moneys due the city.[1]

The commissioner of public health and safety is in charge of the police and fire departments, the license collector, plumbing and sanitary inspector, meat inspector, city electrician, and the building and fire inspector. He is also superintendent of the health department, and in charge of the

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1. Illinois State Register, April 18, 1911; Illinois State Journal April 18, 1911.

city prison, and the removal of garbage.[1]

The commissioner of streets and public improvements has supervision over all public work, the cleaning and sprinkling of the streets, the erection, reconstruction and repair of streets, sewers, bridges, viaducts and public buildings. He shall also control and supervise public service utilities, and corporations or individuals rendering service under franchise or contract from the city.[2]

The commissioner of public property shall manage the waterworks of the city and the municipal electric light plant. He has charge of the lighting of streets and public buildings, and the supervision of the city hall.[3]

One of the merits of the commission plan is that the powers of government are not only concentrated in the hands of a small board, but that each commissioner is in charge of a definite branch of the city government and responsible for its conduct. In order to secure efficiency and economy, it is therefore essential that those powers and functions which are closely related be placed in the same department, and that each commissioner be given the necessary means of enforcing the responsibility resting upon him. In the distribution of powers in Springfield one finds this principle violated to some extent, especially as regards the duties assigned to the mayor. As commissioner of public affairs the mayor has been

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1. Illinois State Register, April 18, 1911; Illinois State Journal, April 18, 1911.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

given a number of miscellaneous functions which it was difficult to place elsewhere. At the same time he has been assigned certain duties which naturally fall in other departments. For instance the administration of the cemetery department, which in its nature is so closely related to public works and property, should logically be placed under the control of either the commissioner streets and public improvements or of the commissioner of public property, as should the affairs of the gas and meter inspector. Shortly after coming into office the commissioners decided upon a policy of individual independence and non-interference in the conduct of administrative affairs. Such a policy, they determined, was necessary in order to secure efficient government and responsibility. This very principle is violated, however, in the distributive ordinance by giving the mayor rather than the commissioner of public health and safety the right to issue and revoke liquor licenses. Since the duties of the commissioner of public health and safety are largely those involved with the regulation of saloons, it is unfair to place upon his shoulders the responsibility of enforcing the ordinances, and at the same time withhold the most efficient means of enforcing that responsibility. The mayor has strenuously opposed the transfer of the license issuing power to its proper place.

It is also provided by ordinance that each commissioner shall have power to make and enforce such rules, not inconsistent with the laws and ordinances, as may be necessary to secure efficient work in his department.[1] By ordinance

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1. Illinois State Register, April 18, 1911; Illinois State Journal, April 18, 1911.

the mayor's salary was fixed at $4000 and that of each commissioner at $3500 per annum.[1] According to the provisions of the state law, in cities over 40,000 the commissioners must devote at least six hours per day to the performance of their official duties.[2]

After perfecting a general organization, the commission turned its attention to the selection of applicants for the twenty-three city offices.[3] Springfield has adopted the optional civil service law provided by the state legislature for cities. Hence only the principal positions in the municipal service are filled by appointment at the discretion of the commission.

The commission met with some little difficulty in making a final selection of applicants for the twenty-three municipal positions.[4] The chief trouble seemed to be that each commissioner, or several commissioners grouped together, had an appointee for each position. As the appointments were decided upon in secret session and the action there determined upon merely ratified in the open meeting, it is difficult to state definitely the method followed. It is said that the election of only one official was unanimous, that a number of ballots were cast, and that "trades" were resorted to in most cases. Three of the commissioners stood to-

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1. Council Proceedings for April 1911, p. 3.
2. Hurds Revised Statutes, 1911, Chapter 24, sec. 30, p. 269.
3. Council Proceedings for April 1911, p. 4-5.
4. Illinois State Journal, April 21, 1911.

gether in "putting over" several of their favorites.[1] In filling the places of city engineer, superintendent of streets, and sewer inspector there was considerable friction and disagreement. The commissioner of streets and public improvements felt that as head of the Board of Local Improvements he should have a right to name the appointees for these positions, and the mayor supported him in this attitude.[2] The natural result was that the appointments were not completed for almost three months.[3] The deadlock was finally broken by the commissioner of public property switching to the side of the commissioner of streets and public improvements and the mayor.[4]

As to the qualifications of these city officials there is some difference of opinion. All agree that in the selection of Dr. G. T. Palmer as Superintendent of the Health Department the commissioners acted wisely. The comptroller, who had been for sixteen years head book-keeper of a manufacturing company, was probably well qualified for his position as judged by the standards ordinarily accepted, as was also the city clerk, who had been the proprietor of a retail grocery. In some of their selections, however, the commissioners were not so fortunate. The city treasurer, for instance, although well experienced as assistant-county treasurer, belonged to the old type of political office holder as did the city engineer and others. The mayor has also been instrumen-

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1. Illinois State Journal, April 21, 1911.
2. Ibid.
3. Illinois State Journal, June 20, 1911.
4. Council Proceedings for June 1911, p.6-7.

tal in securing the nomination of a number of his relatives and personal friends, and has controlled the civil service commission through its personnel. It may be said that the civil service commission has not accomplished as much as was expected of it, and that the merit system as administered by them has been severely criticized. This review of the commissioner's appointments shows not only a survival of methods resorted to by the old aldermanic form of government,- trickery, trades and polical interests; but is an evidence of a decided lack of harmony at the very beginning of the administration. One notices here an alignment of three of the commissioners against the mayor and the remaining commissioners which has continued to the present time.

Financial Administration Under Commission Government.

The early history of the commission form in Springfield is largely a narrative of the struggle against the obstacles placed in the path of progress. The county treasurer, holding that the commission form law was unconstitutional, refused to hand over $125,000 of the tax money of the city. The former city treasurer likewise refused to transfer $100,000 of the city's money to the new government.[1] This action was due in part to politics and in part to an attempt of the "machine" to repudiate the administration. After months of delay in the Sangamon County Circuit Court and in the Illinois

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1. Illinois State Register, April 30, 1911.

Supreme Court, a decision was handed down on December 21, 1911, by the latter court, upholding the validity of the commission form act and instructing the money to be returned.[1] During this period the municipality was in bad straits financially. The commissioners found the finances of the city in poor condition with some $25,000 of the taxes to be collected in the spring of 1912 already anticipated.[2] Without available funds, the commission was forced to borrow money from the banks to meet the April and May payrolls, and was unable to undertake any marked improvements. On several occasions the commissioners pledged their own personal credit to keep the city going, and took money from their own pockets to pay the interest on foreign held bonds.[3]

With the receipt of the $200,000 in tax money, held up pending the decision of the validity of the commission form of government act, the commission began a reorganization of the finances of the city in order to secure the credit of the government. Most of the money turned over by the county treasurer was used to pay debts contracted before and after the adoption of the commission form, some of which ran back as far as ten and twelve years. By the first of the year 1912, Springfield was on a cash paying basis for the first time in many years. This left the city with no available funds, except such as could be secured by anticipating the warrants

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1. Illinois State Register, December 22, 1911. Illinois Supreme Court Reports
2. Ibid.
3. E. L. Chapin, Atty.

upon taxes to be collected in the spring of 1912. The debt of the city was centralized, however, and placed in the banks and other places of credit. Today each bill is paid in full as soon as passed upon by the commissioners. The city is many times without money as under the aldermanic system, but there is a difference in that the commissioners attempt to keep all bills paid up, and maintain the credit of the municipality by borrowing money from the local banks. On July 16, 1912, the city comptroller's books showed that outside of the bonded indebtedness, the unpaid bills against the city amounted to only $8,734.55, the smallest total known in many years.[1] On January 1, 1913, the total amount of bills outstanding was $13,527,00. The commissioners have found it necessary, however, as was the custom under the aldermanic system, to anticipate a large part of the taxes for the succeeding year, and to borrow for almost five months payroll at the close of each year. At the end of the last fiscal year under the mayor and aldermen (1910-11) the amount of anticipation warrants outstanding was $149,700.00. During the first year under commission form over $150,000.00 was anticipated from the 1912 levy, while on January 1, 1913, $90,000 of the 1913 tax had been anticipated for the purpose of meeting payroll obligations.[2] Thus it appears that there has been little improvement in this respect under commission form,

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1. Illinois State Register, July 16, 1912.
2. Communication from Commissioner Coe, January 6, 1913. Also Auditor's Reports for 1910-11, 1911-12.

and that it has been impossible as formerly to keep the city within its revenue.

With the establishment of the credit of the city by the commissioners, the banks, which had previously refused to loan any more money to the city, have been willing to advance amounts necessary to meet the monthly payroll and other expenses. The business transactions of the commissioners are open and above board, and a majority of the bankers seem to have confidence in the ability of the commissioner of accounts and finance.

The new method of awarding contracts for public buildings, supplies, and printing has resulted in a saving to the city. With competitive purchasing under the present form of government, and with most of the supplies purchased by the commissioner of accounts and finances acting as a central purchasing agent, the price of supplieshas been lowered from ten to twenty per cent.[1] For example, fire hose formerly costing $1.10 per foot is now purchased at ten per cent reduction. In the words of one of the commissioners, "By paying off the old debts which had accumulated for years, and meeting obligations promptly, the commissioners have raised the credit of the city so that business firms which would not sell to the city under the old form are now competing for its business, and purchases are being made on a competitive basis, and at a great saving to the city."[2]

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1. Public statement of Commissioner Coe.
2. Statement of Commissioner Coe on file with the Chamber of Commerce, Springfield.

The policy of the commissioners has been to promote economy and efficiency. In carrying out this policy several offices found to be superfluous under the new form have been abolished, thus saving from $5000 to $6000 for the city.[1] In some offices one clerk is doing the work formerly performed by two. The assistant-city clerk, the assistant-treasurer, and the gas inspector were done away with. The duties of the oil inspector were found to be very light, while there was at the same time a pressing need for a time-keeper on the streets and public improvements. These two positions were combined with no material increase in salary over that formerly paid to the oil inspector. Three per cent interest has been secured on public moneys deposited in the various banks. A total of $4,840.05 in interest was turned into the city treasury during the first year under commission form, while during the present year $2,080.27 has been derived from this source.[2] This saving, however, should be attributed more to the provisions of the commission government statute than to any activity of the commissioners themselves, for the law makes it obligatory that at least three per cent interest be paid on all city deposits, and that the revenue so obtained be turned into the general fund of the city.[3] Several thousands of dollars have also been saved by a prompt payment

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1. Illinois State Register, April 21, 1912.
2. Report of Arthur Young Auditing Co., 1911, and Comptroller's Report, 1912-13.
3. Hurd's Revised Statutes of Illinois, 1911, p. 309, Chapter 24, sec. 51.

of interest-bearing obligations as soon as they have become due.[1] In December 1911 the city was saved two per cent interest by borrowing $60,000.00 from the waterworks department with which to buy up the tax anticipation warrants.[2]

The absence of graft and political corruption has also been a means of saving money to the city. Formerly it was the custom to pay newspapers for printing and publishing ordinances, although such had not been officially authorized. Immediately prior to election, the city's funds were used to pay laborers who were added to the payroll in order to secure their votes. City officials appropriated money belonging to the city for their own use, and covered up such transactions by false or incomplete entries in the official records. Contractors and assessors were frequently overpaid. This slipshod method of doing business is no longer practised by the commission. As a result of an audit of the special assessment books for four years prior to 1911, many discrepancies were discovered.[3] It was found that the collectors had in some instances secured a compensation of twenty per cent instead of the maximum of six per cent as allowed by the law. The tax payers were unaware of such transactions because the bill for assessment was included in the bill for payment, thus covering up the overcharge.[4] Besides securing the return of most of the money, the commission has made an improvement

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1. Illinois State Register, March 2, 1912.
2. Ibid, January 1, 1912.
3. Report of Arthur Young Auditing Co., 1911.
4. Illinois State Register, August 1, 1911.

in the methods of administering and keeping the accounts of special assessments. Special ledger and journal accounts are kept, showing the exact amount originally assessed for each separate installment of the various improvements, the amount paid in by property owners on each improvement, and the amount imposed and remaining to be collected. The books also show in a more intelligible manner the condition of the outstanding special assessments, accounts and certificates of indebtedness, as well as the cash in the hands of the city treasurer for each improvement.[1] Such complete records will make it almost impossible to defraud the city in the manner followed by former collectors. The commissioners have succeeded in securing the repayment of $10,767.33 wrongfully obtained from the city by former office-holders, and have stopped the payment of fraudulant bills to the amount of $8,293 making a total saving of $19,060.34.[2]

In regard to the administration of the municipal finances, the commissioner of accounts and finance says, "In the Department of Finance we have been able to put the city upon a sound business basis, conducting its business as would a corporation, the five commissioners acting as five directors, all important matters being settled by them in conference. In the comptroller's division a better system is in vogue. Accounts are kept up to date and anyone can find the

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1. Illinois State Register, April 21, 1912.
2. Council Proceedings for February, 1912. p. 6.

exact standing of the city's finances at any time."[1] Arthur Young and Company in their report on the audit of the city's books in February, 1912, note "a vast improvement in methods of handling and controlling special assessments since the former audit in 1911."[2] The auditor's report for the second year of commission government (1912-13) shows no irregularity in the operation of the city's various departments, and recommends few changes or needed improvements, with the exception of a more systematic account of cemetery receipts and expenditures, and the suggestion that another appraisal of the city's property be taken.[3]

There has been only a slight improvement in the actual financial condition of the city under the commission government beyond an establishment of its credit and the reduction of the bonded and floating debt. The commissioners inherited from the former administration a large floating indebtedness of over $100,000.00. They have succeeded in paying off these outstanding accounts, and have reduced the bonded debt from $828,000.00 to $762,000.00, or a decrease of $66,000.00.[4]

City government under the commission form has been slightly more expensive than under the aldermanic plan.[5] During the first year of commission government (1911-12) appropriations were overspent in most of the departments, and the

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1. Public Statement of Commissioner Coe.
2. Report of Arthur Young Auditing Co., for year ending Feb. 28, 1912.
3. Springfield Evening News, May 22, 1913.
4. Communication from Commissioner George E. Coe, January 6, 1913.
5. (Next page).

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5. Corporate Expenses (Auditors Reports 1910-11; City Comptrollers Report 1912-13).

Corporate expenses 1910-11

General government	$ 21,686.04
Public Health and Safety	138,408.99
Public Works	108,181.74
Miscellaneous	54,694.43
Total	$322,971.25

Corporate expenses 1911-12.

General government	$ 36,503.96
Public Health and Safety	146,751.89
Streets and Public Improvements	114,925.94
Miscellaneous	47,931.35
Total	$346,113.14

Corporate expenses 1912-13.

Department of Public Affairs	$ 33,859.47
Department of Accounts and Finances	28,683.71
Public Health and Safety	152,038.30
Streets and Public Improvements	89,009.54
Miscellaneous	49,674.25
Total	$353,265.27

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total corporate expenses were $23,141.89 greater than for the preceding year (1910-11). In the second year of the present administration, the corporate expenses, although about $30,000.00 greater than during the final year of the

aldermanic regime, were only $7,152.15 larger than those for the first year under commission government. The general expense of city government was seven per cent greater during the first year of commission government and nine per cent during the second year, than was the general expense during the last year of the aldermanic regime. The greatest increases have been in the general government, and are due to the large salaries paid the commissioners. The increased expense during the first year of commission government in the Departments of Public Health and Safety and Public Works is to be attributed to the fact that the former council, prior to relinquishing its control over the city government, increased the salaries and wages of the municipal employees. The reorganization and readjustment of the various departments of municipal government has necessarily involved an increased expenditure, but the proportion of increase has been rather small, and there is little doubt that the various savings and the improved service rendered more than offset the additional expense.

The revenues for corporate purposes during the first year (1911-12) were $8,163.95 less than in 1910-11; on the other hand, the revenues for general purposes during the second year of commission government (1912-13) show an increase of $27,104.48 over that of the preceding year under commission government, and an increase of $35,188.91 over that of the last year under the aldermanic system.[1] This increase during the second year, however, was not due, as in other commission governed cities, to a more strict collection of miscellaneous fees and licenses, but to the levying of a new

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1. Corporate Revenue 1910-11 (last year under aldermanic form); 1911-12, 1912-13 (Information secured from Auditor's Report 1910-11; 1911-12; Comptroller's Report 1912-13).

Source of Revenue	1910-11	1911-12	1912-13
Licenses	$122,922.08	$121,392.54	$120,795.39
City Tax	203,042.06	202,314.34	228,128.81
Police Court fines	5,870.95	4,438.12	2,601.56
Miscellaneous fees, licenses, taxes, etc.	19,543.91	10,230.62	16,624.62
Interest on city deposits		4,840.05	2,080.27
Total	$351,379.00	$343,215.67	$370,230.65

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road and bridge tax. At the close of the last year under the aldermanic regime there was an excess of corporate revenue over expenses in the amount of $28,408.35. During the first year of the present administration the corporate revenues were $2,897.47 less than the expenditures, but an improvement was made in 1912-13, with the result that there was a surplus of $16,965.38.

In the waterworks department there has been an increase in earnings under the administration of Commissioner Spaulding. In 1911-12, or the first year of commission government, the revenue of the waterworks department was $81,774.37 greater than the operating expenses, while during the second year of commission government the excess of revenues over operating expenses has been $80,307.72. It should be noted, however, that such a showing has been made possible

by maintaining a high water rate, which policy has met with considerable criticism from the consumers.

Following the analogy of a private industrial organization, one would expect to find efficient accounting, business-like financial methods, the reduction of routine work to a system, well-kept city offices, and business-like attention to duty on the part of the commissioners and city employees. The city hall in Springfield is a well-appointed office building, and not a loafing place for politicians. With the exception of the mayor, the commissioners devote more than the required six hours per day to their work. The city clerk, although not under necessity to give more than eight hours per day to his official duties, very often works ten and twelve hours. In most of the offices there seems to be a spirit somewhat akin to professionalism, and a business sense of duty not usually found in city government. However, one cannot go as far as to assert that the accounting system employed is the most efficient, or the financial methods the most business-like. Although by no means perfect, they are a great improvement over the methods of the previous administrations. The fault does not lie with the neglect of the officers in charge, but simply to a lack of technical knowledge necessary to install a system of efficient municipal accounting. In the handling of money all receipts are not deposited as a petty fund is reserved. This fund should be definitely provided for, so that all receipts may be deposited and bank deposits made to agree with the treasurer's receipts. The treasurer also keeps only one account at the bank for all city funds.

Theseaccounts should be kept separate and distinct. Neither is any charge made for the depreciation of property and equipment, nor is any provision made for a sinking fund which is in contradiction to best business practice.[1]

From this brief survey of the financial administration under commission form it is seen that the greatest improvements have been: (1) the wiping out of a large floating indebtedness which had been allowed to accumulate, and the establishment of the city on a cash-paying basis; (2) a material decrease in the bonded debt; (3) an increase of earnings in the water works department, and the receipt of interest on all municipal balances; (4) a more honest disposition of public funds, the recovery of money falsely obtained by former office-holders, and the stopping of several illegal payments; (5) the reduction of prison expenses, and the abolition of unnecessary offices; (6) the adoption of a more adequate system of accounting; and (7) various minor savings which have resulted from the general practice of economy in all departments. An analysis of the actual receipts and expenditures during the past two years shows that the government has been slightly more expensive, that operating expenses have been increased, that it has not been possible to keep the city within its revenue, and that the tax rate has been raised. Very little criticism is made, however, to the increased expense, and the common feeling among tax payers and business men is that it has been more than offset by an honest and responsible administration of the public funds.

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1. Report of Arthur Young Auditing Co., for year ending Feb.28, 1912.

Public Improvements

The opinion of the average person regarding the success and efficiency of any city government is formulated oftentimes from his observation of public improvements such as street paving, sidewalks, the construction of sewers, improvements in the waterworks system and in public lighting. In the Department of Streets and Public Improvements of Springfield the activity has not been as great as some citizens hoped for. An analysis of the work of this division of the city government shows, however, that there has been a steady and healthy growth of public improvements - as great a development as could be expected in a city with a large debt and limited funds. During the past year the commissioners have taken advantage of a State law which authorizes the levy of a tax of thirty-six cents per $100 for bridge and road purposes, one-third of this sum or about $20,000 will go into the local improvements fund of the municipality.[1]

The amount of paving and sewers constructed in any city does not depend upon the particular form of government, but upon public demand. There has been little difference in the total amount of paving, or in the average contract price of such work under the commission form, but the commissioner of Street and Public Improvements reports "that it is much easier to get improvement ordinances passed than ever before."[2]

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1. Illinois State Register, September 11, 1912.
2. Communication from Commissioner Hamilton, January 1913.

The streets in the business district are cleaned every day, while those in the residence district are given attention only three times a month during the summer, and at irregular intervals during other seasons of the year.[1] The former are kept in much better condition, while there has been little improvement in the residence and outlying districts. The cost remains at about the same rate according to the Commissioner of Streets, amounting to $23,500 for the year ending February 28, 1912. During 1911-12 about two miles of sewers were taken up, cleaned, and replaced, and 10,000 square yards of paving repaired.[2] A new building has recently been completed for the waterworks department at a cost of $48,000, one subway is now under construction, and ordinances for two others have been adopted. Among the prospective improvements is a convention hall, the site for which was recently determined by popular vote.

Although the contract costs of improvements made under the commission form have been only slightly less than under the aldermanic system, more business-like contracts, a rigid inspection of all work done, and the general requirement of a higher standard have made it possible for the tax payers to receive more in return for every dollar expended.[3]

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1. Communication from Commissioner Hamilton, January 1913.
2. Ibid.
3. Communication from Commissioner Spaulding, November 2, 1912.

The Department of Public Health and Safety.

Health Department.

Springfield is the only commission governed city in Illinois with an organized and permanent health department. The department consists of a superintendent of health employed at an annual salary of $1000; an assistant-superintendent, who acts also as dairy inspector, three general inspectors, a plumbing inspector, and a meat inspector. The superintendent, Dr. George T. Palmer is carrying forward the work of improvement begun by him under the previous administration. He has continued the extensive health survey of the city commenced in 1909, and has also extended the work of inspecting dairy cattle. In 1911 inspection was made of every dairy within a radius of fifteen miles with the result that a more sanitary handling of milk has been obtained. The death rate of infants shows a decrease due to the rigid inspection under Dr. Palmer. In 1909 there were 63 deaths while in 1911 this number was decreased to only 41.[1] It cannot be said, however, that there has been any marked advance in the work of this department which can be attributed to the present administration, or that the commissioners have taken any special action to protect the health of the citizens. With an appropriation of only $9000 for the support of a department which concerns so vitally the health and physical well-being of 50,000 people, it is almost impossible to extend the activities of the health officers beyond those absolutely necessary to maintain the health and sanitation of the community. No method has been provided for

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1-Illinois State Register, April 21, 1912.

the sanitary disposal of garbage, and refuse is dumped in waste-places near the city and on vacant lots.

Police Department.

The police force consists of forty three patrolmen, who are selected upon merit by competitive examinations. The police department is organized and disciplined under civil service; a printed book of rules is issued for the guidance of the employees; and daily reports are required from each patrolman, giving a detailed statement of all important happenings on his beat, which are filed for future reference. The duties of the police are those generally connected with the maintenance of order, and they are especially required to see that the saloons comply strictly with the ordinances and orders of the chief of police, to quell all disturbances, and report any irregularities.[1] Efficiency records have been introduced; but it does not appear that they have been faithfully or carefully kept. According to the system established, officers are to be graded on their merits, the standard of efficiency being 80% and "the danger line" 75%. If a patrolman falls below this average, his discharge is likely to follow. Weekly efficiency records based on neatness, attention to duty and resourcefulness are also provided for. If carried out these records would be of great benefit in maintaining the efficiency of the police force.[2]

1-Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, Mr. Davidson.

2-Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.

Thus it is seen that the police department is organized upon a somewhat business-like and systematic basis. The general organization, however, was perfected prior to the adoption of the commission form, and the commissioners have merely made certain changes and improvements in the system already established. Economies have been practiced and reforms introduced since the commissioners assumed control. The police force has been placed on an eight hour basis, there being three shifts of eight hours each instead of two twelve hour shifts as formerly. This arrangement has resulted in a more efficient service without any increase in the appropriation or in the number of employees.[1] Drunks instead of being locked up for a long time are helped to their homes. Commissioner Davidson takes the attitude that policemen should not only be agents for enforcing the law, but should also be interested in preventing crime, and in the general social welfare of the people. The taking of drunks home instead of confining them in prison is an illustration of this new attitude, and lays the foundation for a more effective handling of the drink evil. In harmony with this policy is Commissioner Davidson's proposal of a prison farm, where the prisoners may be employed in profitable work.[2]

Where once the city prison contained sixty or eighty persons all of the time, ten or twelve are now unusual; the number of arrests during 1911-12 was lowered about thirteen per-cent over that of the preceding year; and the prison expenses were cut down. Formerly the justice of the peace paid seventy

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1- Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, Mr. Davidson.
2- Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.

five cents to the patrolman upon the conviction of each person arrested by him. With the abolition of this expensive and demoralizing premium upon arrests, there has come about a corresponding decrease in their numbers.[1] The prison expenses have been reduced by the adoption of a different plan for the feeding of prisoners. Under the aldermanic system the prison-keeper was paid 30 cents per day for the feeding of each prisoner. It was his custom to keep a prisoner as long as possible, or if he released him prior to the expiration of his sentence to collect for the full time. The prison-keeper is now on a salary, and the city purchases the food formerly bought by him. The commissioner of Public Health and Safety estimates that during the first year under the commission form, $1800 was saved to the city in prison expenses, or a saving of 42%.[2]

1-Public Statement by Commissioner Coe; also Illinois State Register for April 21, 1912.

2-Public statement by Commissioner Coe.

Maintenance of Order, Vice-regulation, and Control of Saloons.

The general feeling in Springfield is that the enforcement of the laws and city ordinances has been slightly more strict than it was under the aldermanic system. There is some doubt, however, as to whether there has been any improvement over the administration of Mayor Schnepp, which immediately preceded the adoption of commission government. In July 1911 it was reported that with the aid of the commissioners, dives and saloons of a disreputable character had been closed or prosecuted without partiality, and the once notorious "red-light district" cleaned up to compare favorably with similar districts in any of the cities of the United States.[1] "In fact ", says, the Illinois State Register on July 30, 1912, "the city has become more orderly in every way and on many days the remarkable record has been made of not having a single call for the patrol wagon". The credit for what little improvement has been made is not due entirely to the present administration, however, as many of the reforms in the way of a more strict enforcement of the laws were begun under the previous administration of Mayor Schnepp.

The Commissioners, or rather the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety and his subordinates, have adopted the policy of segregation in dealing with the problems of public vice. Recent investigations conducted by a special commission of the Illinois Senate, show that vice conditions are very bad in Springfield, and that there has been little

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1-Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.

improvement if any in this respect under commission form.[1] Houses of assignation are concentrated in one part of the city, and carry on their business more or less free from public control. It is said by police authorities that liquor is not sold in houses of ill-fame as was the custom under former administrations, but there is no inspection to enforce this prohibition; and it is commonly believed that intoxicants are sold. Despite the freedom from police regulation, there is no solicitation on the streets, and no flagrant disorder in the segregated district. One is impressed with the fact, however, that from a moral standpoint Springfield has little to boast of, and the question as to whether a policy of non-interference is better than public regulation or complete supression is beside the point in the present discussion.

The ordinances controlling saloons are not as strict as those prevailing in many other cities of the same size, and not in any respects as stringent as those found in the Iowa Commission cities. Prior to the election of Mayor Schnepp in 1909 the city was run on a wide open policy, public gambling was common, wine rooms existed, and city officials and police officers are said to have received tribute money from saloons in return for immunity from punishment. Under Mayor Schnepp the worst of these evils were eliminated, and the city advanced morally.[2] Before the adoption of the commission form, the policy of the saloon and liquor interests was to control local politics and the city government so as to secure as

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1-See Chicago Record Herald.
2-Communication from S.S.Breese-ex Civil Service Commissioner.

"wide-open" a policy as possible. The brewery elements seemed to regard it as a special privilege of theirs to rule the affairs of the city; and the fear of losing this influence led them to oppose the adoption of the commission form in Springfield. Being defeated on this score, they attempted to secure control of the system by electing their own candidates to office; and the liquor interests together with the practical politicians were charged with being the instigators of the attack made on the constitutionality of the law.

Three of the commissioners are what might be called "dry men", and were at first in favor of a rigid regulation of the liquor business, while the mayor and one commissioner believe in keeping the saloon within the limits of the existing laws and ordinances, but do not favor too much restriction upon the business. The citizens of Springfield through a referendum vote in December 1911 went on record as favoring a liberal policy in regard to saloon regulation and Sunday closing, and consequently in dealing with these questions the commissioners are governed in their actions by the vote of the people.[1] In view of the attitude of the electors as expressed in the referendum they believe in letting well enough alone and giving the people what they want.[2] Springfield is therefore an "open-town", and theatres are kept open on Sunday, but saloons are closed within the limits of the night hours.[3]

1-Illinois State Journal, Dec. 15, 1911.

2-Communication from T. Gill (Atty).

3-Communication from A.C. Piercel, Pastor 1st M.E.Church, Spfld.

One can fairly say, however, that under the commission form the saloon has lost its old control over the city government although it still dominates most of the local politics. The provisions of the present liquor ordinances are enforced some better than formerly, and the mayor has never refused to revoke a license for serious violation of the same.

There is, however, need for further improvement. Saloons are not only kept open on Sunday according to a vote of the people, but some of them are conducted in a rather loose manner. How much there conditions are due to the personal determination of the administration, and how much to the will of the people as expressed at the polls, it is difficult to say. A majority of the commissioners were at the time of their election pledged to a policy of strict enforcement of the law, and a rigid regulation of the liquor business. After assuming the duties of office, however, they found it impossible to agree, and the responsibility was shifted to the people. To an impartial observer it appears that the commissioners are at error in allowing a somewhat lax execution of the existing laws merely because the voters rejected two very strict ordinances for the regulation of saloons. The decision of the people as expressed in that referendum vote should at least not be regarded as a sufficient excuse for not enforcing the present laws and ordinances governing the liquor business.

Referendum in Springfield.

At the very beginning, the question of saloon regulation and Sunday closing appeared as a bone of contention among the commissioners. In the assignment of commissioners to their

respective departments a disagreement arose because a majority of the commissioners were afraid to place one of the newly elected men in charge of the public health and safety department, on account of his strict views as to liquor regulation and sunday closing. As early as May 1911 a rumor was circulated that the commission, divided as to the question of liquor regulation, was preparing to submit these matters of public policy to the voters.[1]

In July 1911 the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety introduced a saloon ordinance which was more or less drastic, and involved certain revolutionary changes. The most important features were the provisions for the removal of screens and other obstructions from saloon fronts, the licensing of bar-tenders, and the transfer of the power to issue and revoke licenses from the mayor to the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety.[2] The mayor and one commissioner opposed such a radical measure, and the greater part of July and August was spent in discussing and "blue penciling" the ordinance as originally introduced. On August 28, 1911, almost two months after its introduction, the ordinance as amended was adopted by a vote of three to two.[3]

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1. Illinois State Journal, April 5, 1911.
2. Illinois State Register, July 18, 1911.
3. Council Proceedings for August 1911 p. 8. Commissioners Coe, (Accts. & Finance); Davidson (Public Health and Safety), and Spaulding (Public Property) voted in favor of the ordinance and Mayor Schnepp and Commissioner Hamilton (Streets and Public Improvements) against it.

It was said, and with a great amount of truth too, that the commission did nothing for two months but discuss the saloon question. On September 25, 1911, the liquor interests presented a petition containing the signatures of 4607 legal voters, or 3540 more than the required 10%, calling for a referendum upon the ordinance as passed by the commissioners.[1]

With the referendum forced upon them, the commissioners decided to present several questions to the people at the same time, and thus settle once for all the policy of liquor regulation. On October 2, four ordinances were passed by the commission providing for : (1) The Sunday closing of saloons; (2) an increase of the license fee from $500 to $1000; and (3) the prohibition of screens and other obstructions in saloons.[2] The vote upon these ordinances in the commission was three to two as upon the original ordinance providing for the licensing of bar tenders, and other restrictions.[3] On October 30 a petition containing 3700 names protesting against the passage of the dram-shop ordinances was presented to the commissioners.[4] The use of the recall was also threatened by the liquor interests. The mayor and one commissioner forming a minority in the commission, opposed the dram-shop ordinances, partly because they took away some of the mayor's power in providing for a transfer of the right to issue and revoke licenses from that official to the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, and partly because of a belief that the regulations were too stringent.

1-Council Proceedings for Sept., 1911, p.5.
2-Council Proceedings for Oct. 1911, P. 3-4.
3-Council Proceedings for Nov. 1911, p. 6.

The other three commissioners were responsible for the drafting of the ordinances, for their final adoption by the commission, and for their support before the voters.

December 14, 1911 was finally decided upon as the date for the referendum upon the proposed ordinances and in the meantime both factions began a campaign.[1] Little interest was taken in the referendum when first announced, and it was not until the week before the election that the voters really gave serious attention to the issues involved.[2] The three commissioners who stood as sponsors for the proposed measures, placed in the hands of every voter a pamphlet outlining the ordinances and containing arguments for their adoption.[3] Of the two leading newspapers, one, "The Illinois State Register", was out and out in favor of the adoption of the dram shop ordinances, and was unreserved in its praise of the three commissioners; while the other, "The Illinois State Journal", advocated the adoption of only part of the ordinances, and at the same time criticized the commissioners for raising the saloon question at such an inopportune time. A third paper, "The Springfield News", also gave its support to the ordinances; but did not take a very active part in the campaign. "The Record", which is a paper with "wet" tendencies, naturally opposed the measures.

1-Council Proceedings for November 1911 p.6.

2-Illinois State Journal, December 14, 1911. Editorial.

3-Illinois State Register, Dec. 5, 1911.

All of the papers, however, urged the voters to go to the polls and exercise the right of expressing their opinion on a question of public policy. Political advertisements for and against the ordinances appeared in the press, and on the night before election the commissioners favoring the liquor ordinances held a mass meeting at which a somewhat bitter feeling against the mayor was expressed, and his attitude denounced by the commissioners and others.[1] The liquor interests appealed for votes by arguing that an attempt was being made to reduce the mayor to a mere figurehead, and charging the three commissioners with being leaders of a movement to concentrate all the power of government in their own hands.[2] The campaign preliminary to the referendum election was not fought out, primarily upon the question as to whether or not the ordinances constituted a proper regulation of the saloon, but was largely centered upon the commissioners themselves. Men, and not policies were emphasized, thus bearing out to some extent the assertion that commission government is primarily interested in the officials and secondarily with policies of government. The feeling of personal regard for Mayor Schnepp led many to vote against the dram shop ordinances because they attempted to take away some of his authority; Commissioner Coe precipitated a bitter political fight with the former County treasurer and the States attorney; and Spaulding attacked the

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1-Illinois State Journal Dec.8, 1911.

2-Illinois State Register, Dec. 1911.

mayor. One commissioner kept silent, merely ratifying everything the mayor said. Under such conditions, the dram shop ordinances as regulatory measures were relegated to the back ground during the last few days of the campaign. In view of the State wide law on Sunday closing, the taking of a vote on that question was unwarranted and out of place.

The result of the election on December 14, 1911 was a sweeping victory for the "wets", as all four dram-shop ordinances were defeated by large majorities. The vote was as follows:- [1]

Proposition	Yes	No	Plurality against
Licensing bar tenders.	3194	~~674~~ 6374	3180.
$1000 license fee.	3270	6308	3038.
Screen ordinance.	3270	6236	2966.
Sunday closing.	3256	6232	2976.

The returns of the election determined beyond a doubt that a majority of the voters desired a liberal policy; a question which had been puzzling the commissioners for over six months, and which had interfered with their regular work was settled; and the way was opened for harmonious action in the commission. The commissioners were severely criticized; (1) for side-stepping the responsibility of enforcing the already existing laws and ordinances, and(2) for devoting too much time to the dram-shop regulations at the expense of general improvements and progressive reforms in the administration of the city.

1-Illinois State Register December 15, 1911. Illinois State Journal, December 14, 1911.

As said before, in deciding upon problems of liquor regulation and Sunday closing, the commissioners are now guided by the opinion of the voters expressed at this election. Although the State law forbids such, theatres and other places are kept open on Sunday, and prosecutions for violation of the city Sunday closing provisions have been suspended.

Aside from the question of liquor regulation, the referendum on the above ordinances was a valuable experience in that it showed positively that the people are interested in a question of public policy, and will vote upon it when appealed to. The size of the vote itself, almost 10,000, indicates that the voters were wide awake and attentive to important public problems. The referendum if it is to result in a successful expression of popular opinion must involve the voting of a large majority of the citizens. If the number voting is very small as compared with the total number of registered voters, there will be only an incomplete expression of the popular will, the value of which is measured by the size of the vote. There can be little room for doubt that when 75% of the registered voters[1] (as was true in the referendum on the dram-shop ordinances) express their will, that such a vote expresses the ideas of the great mass of citizens on the matter of policy under consideration.

The referendum was employed a second time in compliance with the provisions of the Commission Form Law as to franchise ordinances and bond issues.[2]

1-Total number of registered voters equals approximately 13,000.
2-Illinois State Journal, April 3, 1912.

On April 2, 1912 the following questions were submitted to the voters of Springfield: (1) whether or not a franchise should be granted to the street railway company to lay a double track on one of the streets, and (2) whether a bond issue of $39,000 to meet the riot judgments against the city should be authorized.[1] These propositions did not involve such important questions of public policy as did the dram-shop ordinances voted upon in the earlier election, and since there was little ground for opposition to either measure, practically no campaign was carried on for or against them. Public opinion acting through the commissioners had secured such a franchise with the railway company as the people desired, and the only practical way to meet the riot claims was by a bond issue.

The vote was as follows:-[2]

Proposition.	Yes.	No.	Plurality for.
South 8th Street railway franchise,	4956,	1526,	3430.
$39,000 bond issue,	4057,	1783,	2274.

Both measures were carried, the total vote on the franchise proposition being 6,482 and that on the bond issue 5,840. Altho not much over half as large a vote as was secured in the referendum on the liquor ordinances, the vote registered was a fairly good representation of public opinion. If the franchise ordinance had been passed by the commission in disregard of the wishes of the people, or had involved the giving of a valuable right to the public service corporation without

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1-Illinois State Journal, April 3, 1912.
2-Ibid.

a fair return to the city, public interest would have been greater and the vote larger. But none of these things had been done. The franchise and its accompanying contract were as advantageous as it was possible to secure, and the bond issue was for a legitimate purpose. The total vote on the franchise ordinance (6480-) was 49.8% of the total number of registered voters (13,000); while the total vote on the bond issue (5484) was 44.9% of the total number of registered voters. The experience of Springfield has been that in general the people devote at least a fair amount of attention to public questions submitted to them for approval or disapproval.

The Recall threatened.

The use of the recall was threatened against the commissioner of Public Property in the Spring of 1912, but failed for lack of sufficient signatures.[1] The charges were indefinite and vague, and were brought about because of certain legislation which the commissioner under charge had proposed for the benefit of the city. The leaders of the recall agitation were mostly the boss plumbers, who objected to the employment of non-union plumbers by the commissioner, and to the ordinances regarding the inspection of sewer connections, etc. The petitions were circulated in "the dark", and it was difficult to locate the leaders. An investigation of the waterworks department by the commission showed that the charges made against the Commissioner of Public Property was

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1. Illinois State Register, May 19, 1912.

false and that the motive was plainly "spitework". Finally after about five months of secret work the boss-plumbers announced their failure in securing the commissioner's recall, the petition falling short in the number of required signatures by 1500.[1]

The experience with the recall in Springfield was largely instrumental in leading the Association of Commission Government Officials to adopt at their annual meeting on December 29, 1912, a resolution suggesting that the commission government statute be amended so as to require that all charges made against a commissioner or mayor be sworn to by a certain number of qualified voters, and that all signatures to a recall petition be made on blanks authorized and issued by the city.[2] Such safeguards would, it is believed, prevent the secret circulation of recall petitions, and lessen the possibility of an illegitimate use of the recall. The matter of reducing the per centage of names required for such petitions to twenty five or thirty five per cent was also discussed at the annual meeting of commission government officers, but no official recommendations was made.[3]

The City Government and Public Service Corporations.

In the majority of the special and state laws for commission form of government, the provision is made that all

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1. Illinois State Register, September 10, 1912.
2. Illinois State Register, Dec. 28, 29, 30, 1912.
3. Ibid.

franchises granting away valuable rights in the city's streets shall be ratified by popular vote. This provision wherever found has received much favorable comment, and has been pointed out as one of the most commendable features of the particular commission-form law under question. The knowledge that all franchise grants will be submitted to the people, and that they are open to public scrutiny has also brought about a better relation between the city government and public service corporations. The experience of Springfield shows the value and the adequacy of the safeguard provided in the Illinois law for the protection of public interests against powerful public service corporations. In 1908, the city council, after a stormy session which lasted until two o'clock in the morning, granted to the Springfield Consolidated Railway Company a franchise extending over most of the city, which should continue for a long term of years and with no consideration at all. In contrast to this transaction stands the franchise granted to the same company in 1911 to do business on South Eighth Street for only twenty years and under entirely different conditions from those of 1908. In this latter instance the city, not the company, dictated the terms of the franchise. The commissioners demanded first, that the street railway company reduce its contract price for sprinkling the city streets by twenty per cent (this demand was made because of the inefficient service furnished by the company); second that the company deed to the city a certain strip of land which was needed as an approach to a projected subway; and third that the company agree upon

certain conditions to allow any interurban company to enter the city over the tracks for which the franchise was granted. In case the street railway company and the interurban company could not agree as to the terms, rates, etc., a board of arbitration was provided for.[1] A contract was finally made upon the above terms and embodied in the ordinance granting the franchise, which franchise was on April 2, 1912, accepted by a popular majority of three to one.[2] This business-like contract made with one of the most powerful utility companies in the city is, in my judgment, one of the most important results of the commission government in Springfield. From a single instance it is impossible to draw any definite and final conclusion, but the tendency seems to be in the direction of a better relation between the city and franchise corporations, and in the direction of a removal of "franchise grabbing", and such scandals as formerly existed under the aldermanic form.

The commission at present is working for cheaper gas in Springfield and an attempt is being made to secure an eighty-five cent rate instead of the old rate of $1.20 per 1000 cubic feet.[3] The agitation for cheaper gas in Springfield is not a new movement, but seems to be nearer realization than at any previous time. The aid of an expert from Chicago

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1. Illinois State Register, March 19, 1912.
2. Council Proceedings for March, 1912, p. 9; also Illinois State Register, April 3, 1912.

was employed by the commission in framing the ordinance for better and cheaper gas, and the gas company has agreed to the provisions regarding quality, pressure, service, etc.; and the only question now unsettled is the fixing of an acceptable rate. A careful investigation of the accounts and records of the gas company is now being made, for the purpose of obtaining a statement of the earnings, physical value, and assets of the plant, which data will be employed in deciding finally upon a proper rate.

The Waterworks Department.

The waterworks system of Springfield is one of the city's most valuable assets. The value of the plant as a commercial enterprise is shown by the fact that its total physical value is $783,040.88, while the total assets amount to $852,693.64, an increase in assets over the previous year of $51,205.02.[1] The supply of water has in the past been obtained from the Sangamon River, but is at present secured almost wholly from deep wells.

During previous administrations the waterworks has been allowed to deteriorate. The original pumping plant, installed in 1865, and not equipped with the idea of meeting future development, became overtaxed as the population of the city increased. With each succeeding administration under the aldermanic regime the waterworks department was placed under a new management, and often in charge of men appointed merely for political reasons. Through neglect and maladministration the machinery became inadequate, the pump obsolete, and the whole plant in need of repair. The city was often threatened with a water famine and the deficiency and impurity of the supply were a menace to health and property.[2] In the summer of 1911 conditions became so bad that the plant had to be shut down while repairs were being made, because of the lack of any emergency equipment. During the interim

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1. Annual Report of the Water and Light Departments for fiscal year ending February 29, 1912.
2. Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.

stagnant water was pumped into the mains through the city fire engines.[1]

Willis J. Spaulding, the present Commissioner of Public Property, upon taking charge of the waterworks in 1909 proceeded to place the department upon an economical basis, to eliminate politics, to improve the supply of water and equalize rates. The success of his efforts is shown by a decrease of thirteen per cent in the operating expenses of 1911 over those of 1910, and increase of thirty per cent in net earnings the installation of several new boilers, and the extension of galleries.[2]

The commissioners, soon after coming into office, took up the matter of improving the waterworks system. The initial step in this direction was the passage of an ordinance providing for the metering of all services, a policy which successive council committees, city engineers, and superintendents had urged, but which no council had previously had the courage to carry out.[3] During the year ending February 28, 1912 2719 meters were added, and the work of metering all services is being carried to completion at the present time.[4] The amount of water sold by meters was increased from thirty-six to forty-eight per cent during the first year under commission form, and the percentage of services metered

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1. Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.
2. Annual Report of the Waterworks Department for the fiscal year closing February 28, 1911.
3. Proceedings of the Springfield Council for June 1911, p. 4.
4. Annual Report of the Water and Light Departments for the fiscal year ending February 28, 1912, p. 4, 11.

from 37.6 to 81.4 per cent.[1] "The water patrons", says the Commissioner of Public Property, "are for the most part pleased, and the Water Department will have reduced the pumpage by at least 1,000,000 gallons per day."[2] Almost all of the work of installing meters has been done by employees of the water department, although it is optional with the patron to employ a plumber. "The average cost per installation by the city is $1.50 ... while the plumbers' charge for the same work would amount to from $3.00 to $5.00."[3] Since consumers are compelled to put in meters at their own expense, the policy of the waterworks department has been to make this as light as possible. In carrying out this policy the Commissioner of Public Property met with opposition from the boss-plumbers, who formerly had a monopoly of installing meters. The Journeyman Plumbers Union adopted a rule by which the union plumbers were shut off from doing city work, thus compelling the water department to hire non-union men and putting it in the position of fighting the union instead of the plumbers. This opposition finally led to the circulation of a petition for the recall of Commissioner Spaulding.[4]

Another important line of work in the meter department during the first year under commission form was the testing

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1. Annual Report of the Water and Light Departments for the fiscal year ending Feb.28, 1912, pp.4,11. Annual Report of the Water Department 1911, p. 11.
2. Annual Report of the Water and Light Department for 1912,p.4.
3. Ibid p. 3.
4. Annual Report of the Water and Light Department, 1912, p.3,4.

of all meters which had been in service more than two years. Some of the meters had been in service for from ten to fifteen years without being tested and were found to be often as much as fifty per cent slow, the average loss in registration being forty per cent. This condition involves not only a money loss to the city but an injustice to the consumers, and Commissioner Spaulding advocates at least a bi-annual testing of all meters. The policy of the water department is conservation and economy.[1]

The development and rebuilding of the plant at the river is being rapidly carried forward. The first step toward the rehabilitation of the plant itself was the purchase of a new pump for $50,000 with an average capacity of 10,000,000 gallons per day.[2] Two new 350-horse power boilers have been installed, and another repaired and rebuilt, while a new pumping station building has recently been completed at a cost of $48,000. A new system of drive wells is also being established, the city have purchased in September 1912 a tract of twenty-four acres to be used for the sinking of wells and other plant extensions.[3] As a result of these improvements, the supply of underground water has been so increased as to make it unnecessary to pump water from the river except in cases of emergency. During the period from September 1911

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1. Annual Report of the Water and Light Department, 1912,p.4.
2. Illinois State Register, July 30, 1911.
3. Illinois State Register, Sept. 4, 1912.

to March 1912 it was necessary to take in river water only on a few days in January. Again on September 2, 1912, river water was turned into the mains for a few days.[1]

A careful examination of the waterworks department reports for 1911 and 1912, while showing a marked improvement under Mr. Spaulding's supervision, indicates also an increase in the cost of maintenance and in general operating expenses as between the last year under the aldermanic system and the first year under commission form.[2] These increases have been due to an increase in salaries, the requirement of more thorough work, and the extension of the service. The total disbursements in the waterworks department were also greater during the first year under commission form than during the preceding year. The tendency toward greater expense in the waterworks department is illustrative of the general increase in the expenditures of the various other departments of the city. Commission government in Springfield and most other cities stands for improved service, and wherever such improvements are made on a large scale, there is often an increase in expenditures and a corresponding decrease in net profits. Such an increase in expenditures and decrease in net profits is not necessarily evidence of mismanagement, but is in the case of Springfield an indication of progress and of a desire for more efficient service.

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1. Illinois State Register, Aug. 11, 1912, and Sept. 1, 1912.
2. See Annual Reports of the Water Department, for 1910-11, and 1911-12.

The comparisons given below present an increase in the operating expenses of the water department of $9,541.89 for the first year under the commission form, and a decrease in net earnings of $3,798.95. The total receipts for 1912 are $5,001.87 in excess of those of 1911, while the disbursement for 1912 present a marked increase of $25,556.78 over those for the preceding year. This increase is in the amount of $14,388.84 accounted for by improvements such as drive wells, new boilers and meters; and by an increase of $9,541.89 in operating expenses. In 1911 there was an unexpended balance (excess of receipts over expenditures) of $40,237.00 while in 1912 this excess had decreased by $20,554.91.

The following comparisons will aid in showing the above-mentioned tendencies in the water department:

General Statistics[1]

	Mch.1, 1910	Mch.1, 1911	Mch.1, 1912	Increase or decrease	
Total Assets	$707,339.17	$801,488.62	$852,693.64	In.	$51,205.02
Total Value[2]		1,979,803.00	1,803,824.00	De.	$175,979.00
Net earnings[3]		64,990.15	61,191.20	De.	3,798.95
Total receipts		118,495.97	123,497.84	In.	5,001.87
Total disbursements		78,258.97	103,815.75	In.	25,556.78
Excess of receipts over disbursements		40,237.00	19,682.09	De.	20,544.91
Total operating expenses		37,124.01	46,665.90	In.	9,541.89
Excess of revenue over operating expenses		81,371.96	76,831.94		

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1. Annual Reports of Water Department for 1911 and 1912.
2. & 3. (next page)

Municipal Lighting Plant.

Springfield maintains its own plant for the lighting of the streets and city buildings. This plant was erected and equipped in 1895 by a stock company of private citizens, and at the end of about five years turned over to the municipal authorities. The city, however, did not assume actual possession until 1906, and then only after a strenuous fight in the courts, for "the municipal plant had already demonstrated its earning power and had become alluring to private interests."[4] As the State law does not authorize a municipality to sell current for commercial purposes, the part devoted to commercial lighting was turned over to a private corporation. Because of such a division the city has been deprived of the economies and saving which would result from the larger output of a combined plant.

Since taking charge of the city government in 1911 the commissioners have made some improvements and installed additional lights where necessary. During the year 1911-12, forty lights were installed. The magnetic arc, a more efficient type of arc light, has been adopted, "producing the same amount of light, better distributed at a saving of 33 1/3 % in current consumption."[5] It is planned ultimately to replace

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2. To make these figures comparable one must take into account the installing of 2719 meters, the water department failing to collect the usual half-year on the services January 1,1912. Assuming the average fixture rate on the services is $10, a reduction in receipts to the amount of $13,585 would increase the net earnings of 1912 to $74,776.20.
3. Based on earnings capitalized at five per cent.
4. Annual Report of Water and Light Department, 1912, p, 36.
5. Ibid, p. 36-39.

all the old lamps with this improved type. Several of the engines employed in the plant have been refitted and repaired, and "the lighting system as a whole, considering inside and outside conditions, is in far better operating condition than it was at the beginning of the administration of the present commissioners."1 The present equipment, however, is reaching the end of its usefulness, and it is planned to rebuild the plant in the near future by combining it with the pumping station. The policy of the administration is to make no more permanent improvements at the old city plant, but to install new apparatus at the pumping station to replace the old.

A printed report of the activities of the lighting division was published for the first time in 1912, under the direction of Commissioner Spaulding.

Let us now turn our attention to a consideration of a few of the advantages which it is most commonly claimed have been secured under the commission form of government as a result of the short ballot and the unification of power; and note to what extent these have been realized in Springfield:

(1) Has the concentration of the powers of government in the hands of the commissioners been complete, and is responsibility definitely located?

The Illinois commission government law gives the commissioners broad authority to act, inasmuch as it concentrates legislative and executive power in their hands. It

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1. Annual Report of Water and Light Department 1912, p. 39.

was argued at first that the centralization of the power of government in a small board would be dangerous and a menace to democracy. But such has not been the experiencein Springfield.[1] Instead "the freedom and authority given to the commissioners has placed a direct responsibility upon them which they cannot evade and has had the tendency to cause each man to put forth his best efforts. The council may be called together every day, or at almost any hour of the day to take care of matters that may be brought before it. The commissioners gather around a table and act more as a board of directors in control of a business than as a political body. One of the commissioners says "responsibility is fixed upon a particular officer, each commissioner being responsible for everything in his department. The people are also able to get information, while under the old plan matters were referred and action delayed indefinitely."[2] As a citizen of Springfield expresses it, "The commission form is more simple and get-at-able."[3] According to the views of one of the local newspapers, the powers of government are not scattered, and the government is easy to watch. The work of the citizen and voter is thus made easy and simple and the powers of government are not divided into such small fragments that no single part is worth watching.[4] In Springfield, today, the citizens

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1. Illinois State Register, Dec. 16, 1912 (Editorial).
2. Commissioner George E. Coe (Accounts and Finance).
3. Communication from Rev. A. J. Piercel, First M. E. Church.
4. Illinois State Register, April 21, 1912.

know exactly where to look for attention to any particular matter which they may wish to present to the city government. This is particularly evident in the instances of petition and complaints. Under the aldermanic system where complaints and petition are referred to committees, and from one official to another, it required weeks or months to secure any action, while today such matters are acted upon directly and in a business-like manner, as answer being given at the same meeting or within a week or so at least. This feature alone might justify the adoption of the commission form, "for prompt and effective co-operation betweenthe individual citizen and the municipality in adjusting a multitude of minor matters affecting the health, safety, comfort, and convenience of the ordinary man and his family, will contribute enormously to the aggregate happiness of the people."[1]

The concentration of power in the hands of the five commissioners, however, has not been complete. There still exists a separate park board, a corporation independent of the city government, for the management of parks. The abolition of the park board as a distinct corporation and its consolidation with the general city government would be advantageous as leading to a saving of money and a uniformity of aim in developing the city as a civic center. The town supervisors and the justices of the peace also continue to be ~~chosen at special elections~~.

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1. Hamilton: "Dethronement of the City Boss", p 62.

Neither has the responsibility of each commissioner been entirely fixed. The Illinois Commission Form Act attempts to fix responsibility definitely and positively. Yet, if in the execution of that law such officers as the chief of police are made appointive and subject to removal by the commission as a whole, and if the commissioner of public health and safety whose principal duty is to regulate the saloon is deprived of one of the most effective means of securing that control, namely, the power to issue and revoke licenses, it seems as though he is given the responsibility without the power to enforce that responsibility.

In October 1911 as a result of friction between the chief of police, the mayor and the commissioner of public health and safety, the latter asked for the resignation of the chief of police. The chief refused and an order was introduced in the council to oust him.[1] It appears that during the State Fair, the chief of police, acting under the direction of the mayor, allowed the saloons to keep open until after twelve o'clock, while the commissioner of public health and safety had ordered him to close them at midnight as provided by the city ordinances. The chief of police, an appointee of the mayor under the previous administration, obeyed the orders of the mayor rather than those of his immediate superior. At the council meeting on October 24, 1911,

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1. Council Proceedings for October 1911, p. 7.

Commissioner Davidson presented a resolution for the removal of the chief of police, explaining that a change was necessary for the best interests of the city as the relations between him and the chief of police were not as harmonious as they should be. The mayor and the one commissioner, who usually sided with him upon questions at issue, were out and out opposed to ousting the police chief. The other three commissioners, while attesting to the general ability and efficiency of the head of the police force, determined that it was not proper to demand that the commissioner of public health and safety bear all the responsibility of his office but not possess the powers properly belonging to the same. The resolution of removal was carried by a vote of three to two.[1] The mayor in upholding the chief of police said that the law gave him supervision over all departments, all department heads, and officials, and quoted the commission law to support his statements.[2] It was his opinion, therefore, that the chief of police had not been guilty of insubordination. The meeting of the commission in which this matter was discussed was a very stormy one, being marked by pretty sharp language, and an outburst of ill-feeling bordering almost upon violence.[3] If one additional commissioner had taken the same position as the mayor and one of the com-

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1. Council Proceedings for October, 1911, p. 7.
2. Illinois State Register, October 25, 1911.
3. Illinois State Register, October 24 & 25, 1911.

missioners, the result would have been that the commissioner of public health and safety would have been compelled to retain a subordinate not in harmony with himself, and over whom he would have had no power of removal. Such a possibility is a weakness and under certain conditions a menace to efficient government, especially when a majority of the commissioners do not recognize the importance of maintaining the integrity of each commissioner.

Although the general policy of police regulation, the enforcement of order, and the protection of property from fire is formulated by the commission acting as a whole, the execution of this policy and the working out of minor details is left to the commissioner of public health and safety. Now the commissioner of public health and safety performs a large part of his functions through the chief of police, who is in turn in charge of a number of patrolmen. The members of the police force directly or indirectly depend upon the commissioner for general direction and supervision, and their work is done in compliance with his personal orders. Where the personal element is so strong, and where efficient administration depends upon the harmony and friendly relations existing between chief and subordinates, it is essential that the commissioner of public health and safety should control the appointment of his assistant - the chief of police. In this way only can he enforce obedience in every instance.

The same criticism, though probably with less force, can be made in regard to the appointment of the other city

officials. The commission form law as originally passed by the Illinois legislature provided that the city clerk, corporation counsel, city attorney, assistant city attorney, treasurer, comptroller, city physician, chief of police, and the chief of the fire department, should be elected by a majority of the council and be subject to removal by the same,[1] and that the council should also have power to appoint and remove the heads of all the principal departments subordinate to the commissioners.[2] These were the provisions in force at the time the ordinance distributing the executive and administrative duties was passed in Springfield.

The State law regarding commission government was later amended to read that the council should elect by majority vote the city clerk, corporation counsel, city attorney, assistant city attorney, library trustees and the necessary officers to complete the Board of Local Improvements, provided, however, that if by ordinance the superintendent of streets is appointed by the commissioners of streets and public improvements the council should have no further power.[3] Thus we see that the chief of police, the chief of the fire department, the city physician, and comptroller, are not according to the law, necessarily made appointive and removable by the council, and their appointment and discharge may be assigned by ordinance either to the council or to the commissioners individually, for the

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1. Laws of Illinois, Special Session, 1909-10, House Bill No. 43, sec. 24, p. 25.
2. Ibid, sec. 27, p. 26.
3. Hurd's Revised Statutes of Illinois, Chapter 24, sec. 24, p. 297-298.

amended law further provides that the appointment and removal of heads of all the principal departments subordinate to the commissioners may by ordinance be vested inthe commissioner in charge of the particular department.[1] The Springfield commission, however, has not taken advantage of these changes to alter their original distribution of powers. Since each commissioner is responsible individually for the conduct of his department within the general limits of the State law and the regulations of the commission as a whole, it appears that in order to enforce that responsibility and to secure efficient work in his department, he should be given the power to appoint those of his principal subordinates who are not subject to appointment by the rules of the civil service commission. If not given absolute authority he shouldbe given at least the right to appoint, subject to confirmation by the commission. In case of a violation or abuse of his discretion in this matter the commissioner would be subject to the recall.

This question of the individual responsibility and the extent of the independence of each commissioner came up immediately after the adoption of the commission system in the appointment of city officials. As head of the Board of Local Improvements the commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements claimed the right to name the appointees for the positions of city engineer, street superintendent and sewer inspector. The Board of Local Improvements remained unorganized

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1. Hurd's Revised Statutes of Illinois 1911, Chapter 24, sec. 27, p. 299.

for about a month because several of the commissioners wished to force upon the commissioner of streets and public improvements men of their own choice, who were not in sympathy with him.[1]

In the division of power in Springfield the Mayor is given the power to issue and revoke liquor licenses.[2] Now the regulation of saloons, and the enforcement of the liquor ordinances rests with the commissioner of public health and safety, and the power now possessed by the mayor would be a great aid in enforcing such regulations. Here again is found responsibility without the necessary power or authority to enforce the same. The transfer of this power to its proper place was one of the provisions in the dramshop ordinances defeated in 1911.[3]

(2) What has been the results of the abolition of the ward system?

Formerly there were in Springfield fourteen aldermen elected from seven wards. Each of these officials was interested primarily in advancing the welfare of his own district, and was usually not considerate of the good of the city as a whole. As in many other cities where the aldermanic system prevails, log-rolling and its accompanying disadvantages were present. Today all parts of the city receive like treatment and the commission is interested in furthering the welfare of the entire municipality. The editor of the "Illinois

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1. Illinois State Register, April 21, 1911.
2. Ibid, April 18, 1911.
3. Ibid, November 19, 1911.

State Register" sets forth as one of the reasons for the success of the plan in Springfield, the fact that ward lines have been abolished.[1] One of the commissioners remarks: "The election at large has resulted in the selection of a much higher average of ability, than under the old ward plan."

(3) To what extent has publicity been secured?

One advantage of the commission form law of Illinois is that it provides for publicity in municipal affairs. To what extent has this feature proved a success in Springfield? The meetings of the commissioners are open at all times to the public. A few secret meetings were held at the time of making appointments, but this action met with such severe criticism from the press and from the citizens in general, that the commissioners resolved to abandon it.[2] A pamphlet containing a summary of the proceedings of the city council and a rather inadequate statement of receipts and expenditures is issued each month; and the ordinances and legal notices are made public in the "official newspaper" selected by the city in open competition.[3] The books of the city comptroller are in better shape than formerly, so that it is more easy to determine the condition of the city's finances at any time.[4] Another publicity feature which has operated successfully is the provision that all ordinances appropriating money, or order-

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1. Illinois State Register, April 21, 1911.
2. Ibid, January 27, 1912.
3. Council Proceedings for June 1911, p. 5.
4. Statement of Commissioner Coe. Also Illinois State Register, April 21, 1912.

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ing any public improvement, or authorizing any franchise shall remain on file, open to the public, for at least one week before final adoption.[1] The newspapers have followed the activities of the commissioners and given them wide publicity so that the average citizen is kept informed, at least regarding the general conduct of municipal affairs. The very novelty of the form has awakened an interest among the citizens. As a prominent attorney of the city testifies, "city government has been taken out of the obscurities and placed upon a pinnacle of light where it may be watched."[2]

Although the commission form of government has secured greater publicity of municipal affairs, this feature has been mere incidental to the centralization of power in the hands of a few men and to the interest inherent in a new form of government than to a conscious effort on the part of the commissioners to secure publicity and educate the voters, so that they may really exercise their rights of government. In a city where popular control is depended upon so largely to secure efficient government, municipal reports and accounts must be judged by the extent to which they educate the people to rule intelligently.

As noted above the commission does publish a monthly account of council proceedings, and a list of expenditures and receipts. Such a publication is no doubt better than none at

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1. Hurd's Illinois Revised Statutes, Chapter 24, secs. 33, 34, 35, p. 300-301.
2. Illinois State Register , April 21, 1912.

all as was the case under the aldermanic form, but the value of such statements varies, according to the care with which they are prepared. The account of the proceedings of the Springfield council is merely an outline of the work done by the commissioners, and is not arranged according to any system, or with any particular effort to facilitate its used by the average citizen. To be sure, this pamphlet does contain a record of the vote upon each question presented, and states the action taken upon petition and complaints. The purpose of such a report, however, should be to give the voter as clear a picture as possible of the activities of the city government, and should contain at least some description of the ordinances passed, rather than the meaningless statement that ordinance "number so and so", amending ordinance "so and so" was passed by unanimous vote. The financial statement is also inadequate being simply a statement of total receipts and expenditures for the month, according to the general purposes of expense or sources of revenue. Neither has the commission published any annual financial reports such as auditor's reports, or reports of the various departments with the exception of the waterworks division.

The new form of government also appears to have created a greater spirit of co-operation between the commercial association and the city officials. The former organization has its offices in the city hall and the members of the two bodies have worked together for the future development of Springfield. Several improvement associations were active in

the movement for a new Municipal Hall, and presented various plans for financing the erection of such a building.[1]

(4) What have been the most important results arising from the introduction of the short ballot and to what extent has politics been eliminated?

The ordinary features of commission government might of themselves remove partisanship, by clothing the commissioner with powers which would enable him to act independently of the bosses, and by providing for the initiative, the referendum and recall. As an added security against partisan politics, the framers of the Illinois law provided for non-partisan primaries, an alphabetical arrangement of names on the ballot and the prohibition of the party label. In Springfield as we have already noted, non-partisan voting was the keynote of the campaign for the election of commissioners. The primary and final election were non-partisan, however, only in the sense that state and national politics were absent. Local issues and questions of local and personal politics prevailed at that time, and are in existence today. As E. S. Bradford says in "Commission Government in American Cities", "people must divide on local issues and candidates as on other questions; but much is gained by separating local from state and national matters."[2] Of the commissioners, Mr. Coe and Mr. Davidson

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1. Springfield Council Proceedings, April 1912, p. 8-9.
2. E. S. Bradford, Commission Government in American Cities", p. 257.

are Republican, Mr. Schnepp and Mr. Spaulding are Democrats while Mr. Hamilton is an independent. This division, however, has not caused any serious disagreement or friction among the commissioners themselves, and there has been no apparent alignment according to national party lines. Although the republican press has at times opposed the democratic commissioners and charged them with political favoritism, national party lines have been eliminated, and there is today very little of partisan politics in the city administration. Under the old system it was very common for those representing different political parties to devote a great amount of their time attempting to discredit their opponents politically; often to the injury of municipal business and the demoralization of the public service. "Today", writes one of the commissioners, "party politics, as formerly known, is practically banished from the city hall."[1]

(5) What in general is the attitude of the citizens of Springfield toward the commissioners and the commission form?

The opinion of a number of representative citizens of Springfield is that from a general standpoint, the commission form of government has been a success in that city. E. L. Chapin, a prominent attorney, expresses the view commonly held among professional and business men when he says, "The

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1. Letter from Comssioner Spaulding, December 30, 1913.

Commission Form of Government has with us proved a success ... and I am of the opinion that we have a city government that cannot be exceeded in Illinois elsewhere. Of course you will not understand that it is perfect by any means."[1] One of the assistant-attorneys in the attorney-general's office says, "The commission form of government has proved a success in this city, and is an improvement over the old aldermanic system. Reforms and finances are better handled. There has been less waste, both in labor and in finance, and the financial condition of the city is much better than it was before, the bonded indebtedness having been materially decreased."[2] Similar information and opinions were secured from personal interviews with bank officials, the secretary of the Franklin Life Insurance Company, the secretary of the Springfield Business Mens Association, the director of the city library, Attorney S. S. Breese, Senator Logan A. Hay, Mr. Dallman (editor of Illinois State Register), and Mr. Victor E. Bender (editor of Springfield Evening News).

Of the city papers, one, the "Springfield State Register" (a democratic organ and also "the official newspaper" of the city government) is very strong in its support of the commission form of government, and devotes considerable space to the activities of the commissioners. "The

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1. Letter from E. L. Chapin, December 30, 1912.
2. Letter from T. E. Gill, December 5, 1912.

State Journal" a Republican paper, on the other hand, indulges in frequent criticism. "The Evening News" favors the present form, while "The Record", (wet - democrat) is more skeptical as to the success of the commission form in Springfield.

The editor of the "Evening News" speaks thus: "The time has been too short for an accurate and conclusive opinion, but judging from what has been accomplished under the new form of government, and what is in prospect, it is reasonable to conclude that the commission form is a vast improvement over the old-style aldermanic form ... . Necessarily progress under the new form has been slow (and) the work of adjusting the new to the old presents many difficulties. But the adjustment is being made, and I believe to the material benefit of municipal conditions. Under the commission form the administration of the affairs of the city has attained added dignity, and while the mayor and commissioners are yet subjected to considerable criticism, some of which may be merited, it cannot be denied that the council as it is at present constituted has the confidence of the public in a much larger measure than was the case under the old form. The usefulness and efficiency of the commission form of government will be a matter of growth."

The editor of the "State Register" writes likewise in favor of the present administration of municipal affairs: "We now have in Springfield under the commission form, a government of, by, and for the people. Business methods have been substituted for irrelevant partisan politics in

municipal government, and our commission is bringing order our of the chaos of graft, extravagence, and maladministration which retarded Springfield's growth. The opposition to the system is composed almost entirely of professional politicians. The people like the commission plan."[1]

The refusal of the "Illinois State Journal" to give its opinion on the commission form in Springfield in a symposium of opinions from Illinois editors shows the attitude of that paper.

A prominent clergyman writes that "Our commission is an improvement over the old system. It is more simple and get-at-able. We have no graft as such, and the department heads attend to business. None but the worst elements of the town would want to go back to the old system."[2]

Turning our attention to the official views of commission government in Springfield, we find Commissioner George E. Coe of the Department of Accounts and Finance, voicing his sentiments in the following manner: "The plan is a success here. If the people had a chance to vote upon it after being under it fifteen months, I believe a large majority would favor the continuance of the plan. The opposition is composed of two factos - the brewery and the saloon interests which have hitherto been represented in the council, and the professional politicians who are out of jobs

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1. Illinois State Register, October 6, 1913.
2. Mr. A. C. Piersel, Pastor First M. E. Church, Letter of November 3, 1912.

and have lost their once great influence in municipal affairs. The city is in better moral, financial and physical condition than ever, it seems."[1]

"With reference to the commission form of government," writes Commissioner of Public Property, Willis J. Spaulding, "I think there is no doubt but what a large majority of our people, especially those who have come in personal contact with the administration, will agree that the commission form has many advantages over the old aldermanic system. Recognising a form of municipal government as being merely a system of rules under which the public business shall be transacted, it is evident that these rules may to a greater or less extent encourage and stimulate officials to put forth their best efforts, and provide them the means of handling public matters in a business-like manner ... . Compared with the old system, the commission form is avery great improvement from the standpoint of public interest, and it would seem that no city in the state could make a mistake in adopting it."[2]

The mayor takes a more critical attitude and is hesitant to make any broad statements as to the success of the commission form. In his opinion the present law is at fault, in that it does not provide for a head to the administration, and secondly, in that the commissioners are elected without having their duties assigned." There must be a head

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1. Letter from Commissioner George E. Coe.
2. Letter from Commissioner George J. Spaulding, December 29, 1912.

to any administration" writes the mayor. "There can be no harmony where all the members of the commission have like authority. Besides there is no check on any of the commissioners unless some method is adopted similar to the old council, where the mayor is powerless to act without the council and the council is powerless to act without the mayor ... . I also believe that each commissioner should be elected for a certain purpose, and his duties should be known to the public at the time of his election, otherwise a man knowing nothing of finances may be assigned as commissioner of accounts and finances, or a man knowing nothing of public health and safety many have that work assigned to him, etc."[1] It is difficult to say to what degree the attitude of the mayor has been influenced by his loss of power, and to the fact that he is in a minority. A similar criticism on the part of Commissioner Spaulding, one of the majority commissioners, leads one to conclude that Mayor Schnepps' criticism is not strongly personal. Commissioner Spaulding says, "A city government is in a large degree devoted to the administration of the business affairs of the city - that is to say, the executive function is of much greater importance than the legislative, since the city's authority is all delegated from the State legislature. To get efficiency requires that a business have a head or chief in authority. Under the commission

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1. Letter from Mayor Schnepp, October 13, 1912.

form there is no such head, and this fact contributes a certain amount of weakness which may be more or less according to the personnel. I believe that all the good points of the commission form could be included in a plan by which the weakness referred to could be avoided."[1] One cannot pass lightly over these statements, coming as they do from a public servant who has served both under the old and new forms of government, and from one of the most progressive and efficient men on the commission.[2]

The commission form and the commissioners, however, are not altogether popular in Springfield as the liberal element is against them. The greatest opposition has come from the saloon interests and practical politicians. As expressed by a citizen of Springfield, "It was never the intention of the worst classes of the city to have the new form established, (and) from that hour this element has fought every step." Commissioner Spaulding aroused a feeling of opposition in the circles of organized labor by his independent treatment of the boss plumbers. As a result, the labor unions of Springfield have recently gone on record as opposing the commission form. Others object to the present form of government because they find it more difficult to obtain favors. For instance, a prominent banker (also one of the most extensive property owners) is against the commission form because the commissioners have refused to extend the water mains to one of his outlying

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1. Letter from Commissioner Willis J. Spaulding, November 2, 1912.
2. The problem of providing a head for the administration will be discussed fully in the general conclusion.

and unsettled additions. During the winter of 1912-13 the commissioners have met with severe criticism from citizens who have usually supported them. Even those who regard the commission form of government as a great improvement in that it has provided a more direct and business-like system of municipal administration, have grown tired of the constant friction among the commissioners, and have become somewhat disgusted with their newspaper attacks upon oneanother. This feeling was especially strong at the time of the vacillating and uncertain action of the commissioners in the matter of saloon regulation, and again in determining upon a site for the new municipal hall, both of which aroused a spirit of popular opposition.

Between those who can see nothing but a long list of improvements and reforms due to the commission form of government and those who have nothing but criticism and objections to offer, stands the great majority of business and professional men and property-owners, who in a more or less conservative manner regard the new form of government as an improvement over the aldermanic system and as a step in the direction of better government.

Summary

From the preceding discussion we see that the following results have been obtained in Springfield during the period it has been under commission government:

(1) On the whole the commissioners are of a higher type of municipal servants than the average persons elected under the aldermanic form.

(2) The work of the city is administered in a more business-like manner, due largely to the fact that the commissioners personally supervise the work of their departments, and with one exception give as much attention to the city's affairs as they would to their own business. The fire and police departments have been reorganized, and a more adequate system of accounting and book-keeping has been adopted.

(3) The waterworks system has been repaired, the pumping station practically rebuilt and equipped with new machinery, the supply of pure underground water increased, and all services metered.

(4) The passage of public improvement ordinances has been facilitated, contracts have been made on a more business-like basis, and all public work has been subject to a more careful inspection and supervision.

(5) Outstanding bills of over $100,000 inherited from previous administrations have been paid off, and the credit of the city established. The bonded debt has been decreased

by $60,000, petty graft has been eliminated, and economies practised.

(6) National and state politics have been eliminated from the city government, and the brewery and saloon interests have lost their former control over the municipal officers.

(7) Ward lines have been abolished, and the interests of the citizens are now considered as a unit.

(8) Relations existing between the city and public service corporations have been improved.

(9) The people have been given the opportunity to determine through the referendum, important matters of public policy such as liquor regulation and Sunday closing. It cannot be said, however, that the indirect results of their action have been advantageous.

(10) Lastly, there has been an awakened interest in municipal affairs, due in a large measure to the very novelty of the commission form, and partly to the belief of the citizens that their efforts will result in some definite action.

On the other hand:

(1) There has been a noticeable lack of harmony among the commissioners, and on several occasions they have resorted to political and personal attacks of the kind that were so common under the aldermanic system. Such a state of affairs has not only aroused popular opposition, but has also decreased the efficiency of the government and hindered progressive, unified action.

(2) The mayor-commissioner has not given as much atten-

tion to his official duties as the law requires, and in a few instances has aroused opposition among his colleagues by an attempt to exert a superior authority.

(3) The civil-service commission has not always been allowed the freedom from official control it should rightfully possess.

(4) The commissioners have at times been too much under the control of outside influences, and have displayed a hesitancy to proceed on their own initiative. They have also attempted to shift responsibility to the people by means of the referendum.

(5) The present methods of municipal accounting and reporting, while showing a very great improvement, need further reorganization and reform.

(6) Government has been slightly more expensive, taxes have been raised, and it has been as difficult as ever for the city to live within its revenue.

(7) The work of the commissioners has been largely administrative in character, and their activity in legislation has been very slight. The city code, for instance, has not been revised since 1902 and contains many "dead letter laws" and regulations which are inoperative today. It should be said, however, that in drawing up the recent ordinances for the regulation of the quality and supply of gas to be furnished consumers, the council has employed methods which conform with the most modern standards, and has proceeded only after a careful and detailed study of the situation. In

their present attempt to secure a lower gas rate, the commissioners have employed the services of Professor Bemis of Chicago, and have sent one of their own number to New York City for the purpose of conferring with experts and making a study of municipal regulation in that city.

From this summary it is safe to conclude that the advantages secured under commission government more than offset the disadvantages, and that there has been an improvement in the government of Springfield during the past two years. The plan has been in operation for too short a time to state beyond contradiction that it is an absolute success, or that the benefits which have been secured within the last two years will prove permanent. As said before the commission form of government does not of itself insure success. No form of government in the United States can do that. It merely enlarges the opportunities for a more business-like administration of city affairs, and makes honest and popular government more possible. In the last analysis the success of the commission form of government depends largely upon the personal equation, and upon certain fundamental tendencies in human nature. To be a success, the commission form of government demands that the voters have sufficient interest and civic pride to secure the election of good men, and once these men are in office to enforce the responsibility which is placed upon them, and which is capable of being adequately enforced under the provisions of the Illinois Commission Form of Government Law.

Chapter IV

Commission Government in Decatur, Elgin and Moline.

I. Decatur.

Decatur with a population of 31,140, is the second largest city in Illinois under commission form of government.[1]

Under the aldermanic system, the personnel of the city government was determined in large measure by national and state politics. As Decatur is normally Republican, members of that party were usually given a preference in the municipal service, and the city officials were more or less dominated by party leaders. The streets "were notoriously dirty", as the political henchmen in the street department did not have sufficient intelligence to operated the street flusher, which had been purchased by the city at a great expense. The city was in need of a better class of employees and a more careful supervision of public work. It was also difficult to fix responsibility. For instance, wooden lamp posts were put up in opposition to the popular demand thatiron poles be used, but no one knew to whom complaints could be made. Finally, the newspapers took up the matter, but the city government was too cumbersome to reverse the action and the wooden poles remained." Then, too , the last council was divided eight to six, and this deadlock made important legislation practically impossible. What little was

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1. Decatur was visited by the writer in April 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. Edgar H. Allen, Decatur, Ill.

accomplished was the result of compromises and trades.[1]

These conditions led to a campaign for the adoption of the commission form of government; petitions were circulated; an election was called; and on January 17, 1911, the commission form of government was adopted by a vote of 2265 to 1419, or by a majority of 846. A total vote of 3684 was cast, which is sixty-one per cent of the total number of registered votes.[2]

In the primaries sixty-four candidates sought nomination as commissioners, while four contended for the position of mayor. The campaign was "constructive", and the newspapers of the city devoted much space to the qualification of the various candidates. In the primary, as well as in the final election, national politics were eliminated, and the issue became one of the "wets" against the "drys". As a result of the primary election the two factions broke even, one"dry" and one"wet" candidate for mayor and four "drys" and four "wets" for commissioner being nominated.[3]

At the general municipal election on April 16, 1911, the issue was again largely that of the saloon against the anti-saloon interests. The "wets" were successful in electing a majority of the commission - the mayor and three commissioners. As to the men elected: Mayor-Commissioner Dan

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1. Communication from Mr. Edgar H. Allen, Decatur, Illinois.
2. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, November 1, 1912.
3. Communication from Mr. Edgar H. Allen.

S. Dineen was a successful grocer man, and as mayor under the aldermanic system gave the city a fairly efficient administration. Mayor Dineen has a personality which impresses one, and seems to exercise a coördinating influence over the other commissioners, without appearing at the same time to interfere with their independence of action.

Commissioner H. F. Robbins has been a municipal officer for fifteen or twenty years, and was city comptroller at the time of his election. Mr. Robbins is a man of high standing in the community, and is well equipped by previous experience for the work he is now carrying on. Commissioner Robbins is, however, opposed to the adoption of modern methods of accounting, and prefers to contunue the system which has been in use for years.

The Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, W. P. Shade, is the oldest man on the commission, and an ex-alderman. Commissioner Shade is an extreme "wet" man, and for many years was local manager of an important wholesale liquor house. From the standpoint of previous business experience and executive ability, Mr. Shade was probably the best qualified of any of the men elected, and it was the belief of the majority of the voters that he would be the most efficient man on the commission. The Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, on the contrary, has proven to be less capable and active than his colleagues, and seems to lack initiative and force. Most of the actual work in the Department of Public Health and Safety is performed by the police and fire chiefs, who have charge of the discipline and organization of the men under

their supervision.

Commissioner Charles Becker (Streets and Public Improvements) was formerly a painter by trade, and at the time of his election was in the real estate business. Mr. Becker is a new man in the city government, is hard-working and conscientious. He has, however, taken occasion to differ with the other commissioners, and has caused the only serious friction which has arisen in the council

Commissioner H. Ruthrauff (Public Property) was for four years in charge of the city waterworks, and is probably the best equipped and most efficient man on the board. He was also the only "dry" man elected. Commissioner Rutrauff gives his entire attention to the duties of his office, and spends most of his time in active work at the light and water plants.[1]

As a whole, the men chosen as commissioners are not of a much higher type or of a different class from the average aldermen under the former system of government.[2] Two of them are experts in their particular departments, and it is safe to say that neither of these men would have sought the position of alderman.[3] On the other hand, the mayor and two of the commissioners had been mayor or aldermen under the aldermanic system. The essential difference is that today each member of the city government devotes his entire time to the affairs of the municipality, and is directly responsible

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1. The above information regarding the qualifications of the commissioners was obtained by personal interviews and investigation. (For Notes 2 and 3 see next page).

for his particular department. The men elected are not idealists and they have not given perfect satisfaction in every respect; but "they have displayed honesty and common-sense, and a willingness to be advised by those who could properly qualify as experts in certain subjects. In fact they have solicited such advice."[4] The commissioners work together fairly well, although harmony in the board is not at all times perfect. Only recently one of the Commissioners in a signed newspaper statement rather unwisely criticized his colleagues. "The commissioners fight among themselves over unimportant matters, but on only one instance, a street paving job, has the offishness of one member threatened a serious split."[5]

The commissioners do not come from any one particular district, and no partiality is shown in the personnel. Two members reside in what is called the "East Side", one in the central portion, one in the southeast portion, and one in the northern part of the city. The only locality which is not represented by a member on the commission is the important residence district in the west part of the city. The fact that this district has no representative is more or less important as indicating to some degree the type of men

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2. Communication from Mr. Jas. A. Corbett, President, Citizens National Bank, Decatur, Illinois, January 8, 1913.
3. Communication from Professor A. T. Mills, James Milliken University, Decatur, Illinois.
4. Communication from Mr. W. H. Hardy, Managing Editor of the Decatur Herald.
5. Ibid.

one would expect to find on the commission.[1] The commissioners in Decatur are all Republicans, and with one exception are "wet" men. The fact that they work together in harmony is perhaps due in large measure to these two factors, which serve as means of coherence and coördination. The commissioners continue to take a somewhat active part in their several party organizations, and in a few instances, it is said appointments have probably been made because of Republican or personal preferment. Nevertheless, partisan politics as formerly known appears to have been almost eliminated, while petty local or personal politics have been reduced to a minimum. Ward and sectional jealousies have been done away with, and at the present time very little attention is given to the equal distribution of benefits and service among the wards. Instead the commissioners are working for the welfare of the city as a unit, and it is upon this principle that new pavements are constructed, lights installed, and other improvements added.[1]

The general attitude of the people of Decatur towards the present administration is well expressed in the following words of Mr. H. C. Schaub, editor of the Decatur Review: "All of the commissioners are generally thought to be faithfully,

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1. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, March 4, 1913.
2. Communication from Professor A. F. Mills, James Milliken University, Decatur, Illinois.

earnestly and intelligently trying to give the city a good administration. While some are believed to be much better officials than others, none are being seriously criticized."[1]

The distribution of the powers and functions of government differs only slightly from that found in Springfield or Elgin. As Commissioner of Public Affairs the Mayor is given charge of all parks and playgrounds, and has supervision of the City Hall, the public library, and the clerk of the council. Thus it is seen that the powers given to the Mayor of Decatur are more closely connected, and more definitely correlated than the function assigned to that official in Springfield. Neither do we find the mayor in charge of a number of relatively unimportant miscellaneous offices such as the gas and meter inspector, oil inspector, inspector of weights and measures, etc. The duties of the Mayor in Decatur are of greater consequence and involve more careful administrative supervision than those assigned to the same official in Springfield andElgin. The method of distribution followed in Decatur is an improvement over that provided in Springfield in that: (1) the park board has been abolished and the parks placed under the direct control of the commission; (2) the functions groupedunder each department are more closely related; and (3) the mayor's division is not regarded as a dumping ground for miscellaneous functions and employees.[2]

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1. Communication from Mr. H. C. Schaub, March 3, 1913.
2. See Proceedings of the City Council of Decatur for May, 1911, page 31ff.

Responsibility has been secured in the city government under commission form, and the administration of public affairs has become thereby more efficient and business-like. The city government is today operated upon the basis of individual responsibility and independence; and since each member of the commission is in charge of a certain department of government and is individually responsible for the conduct of the same, he naturally puts forth his best efforts to secure harmony and business-like working-conditions in that department.[1] Each commissioner is expected to do his own work and is left free from interference after appropriations have been made, and the general policy of action has been determined upon by the council. As Mayor Dan S. Dineen writes, "If a member of the commission believes that the department over which he has supervision can be bettered by certain improvements and changes, recommendations are made to the council, and if after investigation it is deemed advisable to follow out the recommendation, it is properly taken care of. ... There has been no tendency whatever relating to the shifting of responsibility since the adoption of the commission form."[2] The principles of the commission form of government act have been so applied in Decatur as to permit of a wide range of individual action and freedom in administrative matters, subordinate only in a general way to the action of the commission as a whole. This subordination, however, is more legislative than administrative in nature and is confined almost wholly to the determination of

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1. Mayor Dan S. Dineen, March 4, 1913.
2. Communication from Mayor Dan. S. Dineen, March 4, 1913.

policy. Once the policy has been determined by the commission acting as a council, there is little interference with the execution of its details. Such an arrangement, it seems, permits of more efficient government under the commission form than is found in those cities where the mayor-commissioner or the council frequently interfere with the work of the individual commissioners. These conditions are possible, however, only where there is rather complete harmony among the members of the commission.

A more efficient and business-like administration of the city's affairs has resulted from the concentration of responsibility and the centralization of powers in the hands of a small board. "City government in Decatur", states Professor A. F. Mills of James Milliken University, "is now more efficient because more prompt in action and centralized in form."[1] "A big improvement", writes the editor of the Decatur Review, "is the despatch with which important matters are taken up and acted upon."[2] It is a simple matter today to bring any matter before the commission, and if necessary secure an answer, and in some cases definite action within twenty-four hours; while under the aldermanic system weeks and months might have been required. "The city council is now always on the job, complaints are quickly investigated, and public work despatched with the minimum of red-tape."[3]

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1. Communication from Professor Mills, December 10, 1912.
2. Communication from Mr. H. C. Schaub, March 3, 1913.
3. Illinois State Register, October 6, 1912.

The commissioners maintain combined offices, devote their entire time to city affairs, hold regular meetings each Tuesday and Thursday, and at other times are in daily attendance at their respective officers. All matters of public interest may at any time be taken up with the proper officer in charge and action secured with promptness, thus doing away with the possibility of long delays and the shifting of responsibility.[1] "In a word, under the commission form of government the affairs of the city are handled in much the same manner as any well-regulated private business."[2]

The citizens of Decatur have coöperated with the commissioners to secure better government, and at first there was an awakened interest in municipal affairs. At the present time, however, there is little indication of any widespread or general interest in the work of the city government, although there is a tendency toward a close coöperation between the commissioners and such civic organizations as have striven for the growth and improvement of the city.[3] During the past two years there has been very little opposition on the part of property owners to such public improvements as paving and sewers. The fact that a large amount of pavement and sewers has been constructed in the various parts of the city, and also the addition of extensive territory to the municipal-

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1. Illinois State Register, October 6, 1912.
2. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, November 1, 1912.
3. Springfield Illinois State Register, October 6, 1912.

ity indicate in a general way the spirit of popular concern in the development of the city.

The offices and the council chamber of the city of Decatur are located in the rear wing of the county court building. The commissioners have their offices in a large room on one side of the council chamber, while on the other side are the offices of the city clerk and treasurer. These rooms are conveniently located and easily accessible to the public, and it is possible to find the commissioners in their respective offices at almost any hour of the day. The quarters of the commissioners were found to be kept in a very orderly manner, but some criticism could be offered to the general appearance of the offices of the city comptroller and city clerk. The writer had an opportunity of attending a regular session of the Decatur council on April 3, 1913. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dineen at ten o'clock, with the commissioners seated informally about a table in the council chamber. At the mayor's side sat the city clerk, the corporation counsel, and the city engineer. Two newspaper reporters were also present. Each commissioner handed to the city clerk the items of business he wish to transact, and this officer read all motions and called for all votes. The room was open so that spectators could pass in and out, there was no oratory, long speeches, or "grand stand play". With one exception the action of the body was unanimous, all business was disposed of in a direct and business-like manner, and the session was adjourned in thirty minutes.[1]

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1. Data secured by personal investigation, April 3, 1913.

in the field of progressive municipal legislation. In September 1912 a revised compilation of all ordinances passed since 1900 was completed and published.[1] The Board of Local Improvements has been reorganized; a department of plumbing has been created,[2] and the inspection of weights and measures has been further regulated.[3] An ordinance has also been passed for the sanitary removal and disposition of garbage;[4] a humane officer created;[5] a public comfort or rest station established;[6] and a public market installed.[7] The events connected with the establishment of the city market illustrate the manner in which the citizens and commissioners have coöperated and worked together for the realization of common ends. In September 1911 the commissioners took up the matter of setting up a public market, and in the following month the Decatur Herald conducted a trip to South Bend, Indiana for the purpose of inspecting the city market in that place. Mayor Dineen represented the commission as a member of this party.[8] As a result the commissioners on October 16, 1911, adopted an ordinance establishing a market on North Franklin Street, regulating the sale of provisions therein, and providing for a market-master. In determining upon the details of this ordinance the commissioner took into consideration the wishes of the various citizens as set forth in

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1. Proceedings of the City Council of Decatur, Sept.1912,p.5.
2. Ibid, March 1912, p. 3.
3. Ibid, July 1911, p. 12.
4. Ibid, October 1911, p.6.
5. Ibid, April 1911, p. 12.
6. Ibid, November 1911, p. 9.
7. Ibid, October 1911, p. 13.
8. Ibid, October 1911, p. 3.

petitions and communications to the council. For instance, the hours during which the market should remain open were changed upon petition so as to accommodate the working classes.[1] On other occasions the commissioners have molded their action so as to conform with the desires of the citizens; although in a few cases it appears as if the commissioners were too subject to outside influences. Such a tendency, however, is an indication of a desire on the part of the commissioners to work in harmony with the people and to act as the true representatives of the popular will. The people on the other hand realize that the present government is more responsible, that popular opinion and desires are given careful consideration, and they are "therefore interferring in the conduct of public affairs."[2]

Administration of Finances under commission form: The finances of the city were in fair condition when the commissioners came into office; and there has been only a slight improvement under the commission form. The bonded debt at the time the commissioners took charge was $251,000 while at the end of the first fiscal year it amounted to $245,000, or a decrease of $6000. On April 1, 1913, an additional $6000 worth of bonds was retired, thus reducing the bonded indebtedness to $239,000.[3] The floating debt of $45,000 inherited

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1. Proceedings of the City Council of Decatur, October 1911, p.6 & 10. The public market has not been as successful an enterprise as its advocates expected; very little use is made of the booths; and there is a rather strong sentiment in favor of its abandonment.
2. Communication from Mr. W. F. Hardy, Editor of the Decatur Review.
3. Communication from Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, January 31, 1913.

by the commissioners was completely eliminated at the end of the first fiscal year under commission form, and at the present time there is no floating indebtedness outstanding against the city. Although some of the departments have shown an increased expense during the past two years, there has been no increase in total expenditures over those for the last year under the aldermanic form.[1] Considerable criticism has been made to the high salaries paid the commissioners, and also to the increased expense involved in the addition of several new officers, such as superintendents, assistants, secretaries, etc. As the editor of the Decatur Review says, "The new form is at present open to the criticism of being expensive in itself."[2] While the expenditures remainabout the same, the revenues show a decided increase under commission government. In 1910-11 the total revenue for corporate purposes, including the waterworks revenue, amounted to $247,445.89, while in 1911-12 the revenue for general purposes was $271,526.94, or an increase of $24,081.05 during the first year of commission government (nine per cent increase). The largest increases were in the waterworks revenue, and in the income from saloon and other licenses. The waterworks revenue was $8,855.79 greater than in 1910-11, and the revenue from saloon and sundry licenses increased by $18,833.11 during the first year under government, or an increase of forty-five per cent.[3]

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1. Communication from Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, January 31, 1913.
2. Illinois State Register (Springfield,Ill.) October 6, 1913.
3. (See next page).

3. Revenue corporate purposes for years ending April 30, 1910-11 (last years under aldermanic form) and April 30, 1912 (first year under commission form). Figures obtained from city comptroller reports 1911 and 1912.

Source of Revenue	1910-11	1911-12	Increase or decrease
Sundry licenses	$ 41,506.00	$ 60,339.11	$ 18,833.11 (in.)
Water rates	49,824.82	58,780.61	8,855.79 (in.)
Justice of Peace fines, etc.	6,288.30	5,156.70	1,131.60 (de.)
Insurance Tax	2,384.70	2,818.10	433.40 (in.)
General Taxes	143,219.66	133,791.34	
Bond issue	75,250.00		
Fees	261.00	352.91	
Plumbing Inspection	965.50	789.25	
Sewer Inspection	123.00	82.50	
Electric Inspection	557.00	728.39	
Miscellaneous	2,315.91	8,085.23	
Total corporate revenue	$322,695.89	$271,526.94	
Total corporate revenue exclusive of bond issue	247,445.89	271,526.94	$24,081.05 (Increase 9%)

The general opinion is that there has been practically no difference in the financial administration, and that very little money has been saved. Mayor Dineen states: "The finances of the city are being handled in practially the same manner as before."[1] The mayor holds the view that although it is impossible to enumerate any specific cases where extraordinary savings have been effected by means of the commission

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1. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, November 1, 1912.

form, "still the city has made numerous savings at various times, which iftaken in the aggregate would represent quite a large saving."[1] A more correct view is that although very little money has been saved, the expenditures have been much more intelligent, and have resulted in a greater return to the city than was received for the same sum under the aldermanic system. In the opinion of the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance the greatest improvement in the handling of the city's funds has been that, the "people are today receiving more for their money, together with quicker and better service."[2] This has been largely due to the direct interest taken by the commissioners in the placing of contracts, and to a more careful supervision of public work. All money collected has been turned into the city treasury; collections have been more carefully made; and four per cent interest has been received on monthly balaces. This latter item of revenue, which was not found under the aldermanic system, amounted to $602.75 in 1911-12.[3]

The accounting system in Decatur, although simple in form and carefully followed out by the officers in the financial department, is inadequate; being merely a statement of the receipt and expenditures of the various departments with no attempt to give a careful classification of the sources or purposes of the same, or to make an distinction between receipts and revenue, and expenditures and expenses. The expenditures for instance are in most cases

1. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, March 4, 1913.
2. Communication from Commissioner H.F.Robbins, Jan.31,1913.
3. City Comptroller's Report 1911-12.

recorded according to the vouchers paid. No balance sheet is drawn up; no annual financial statement is published; nor is there a detailed auditor's report showing the city's finances schedule by schedule as in Elgin and Springfield. The only annual financial reports are those of the city treasurer and city comptroller, which are drawn up in type-written form. The treasurer's report contains merely an itemized account of the receipts, a statement of the total amount of warrants paid, and the balance on hand. No indication is made of the purpose for which the warrants are drawn. The annual report of the comptroller is given in greater detail, but a proper differentiation is not made between the revenue and expenses of the waterworks department, and other divisions of the city government. Taking it all in all, the system of accounting and repporting is out of date, and should be reorganized.[1]

The Department of Streets and Public Improvements: Under the commission form of government there has been a reorganization of the personnel of the Board of Local Improvements. Hitherto this Board has consisted of the Mayor, the Street Superintendent, and the City Engineer; while at the present time it is made up of the Mayor and the Commissioners.[2] This arrangement appears to be much more advantageous than the plan followed in Springfield, Rock Island andElgin, because

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1. Data secured by personal investigation, April 3, 1913.
2. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, November 1, 1912. Council Proceedings, April 1912, p. 4.

it gives representation to the city as a whole in the matter of public improvements, increases the concentration of responsibility, and lessens the possibility of favoritism and an unequal distribution of benefits.

There has been considerable activity in the construction of paving, sidewalks, and sewers during the past eighteen months, and at the present time the most important improvements under consideration are two new subways and the reconstruction of a third.[1] The commissioners recently executed a contract with the Illinois Central Railroad providing for the construction of a long-needed subway at a saving of about fifty per cent to the city, when compared with a contract which had been practically agreed upon by a former administration.[2] A new system of cluster lights has been installed in the downtown district, and two new parks have been added since the commission form went into operation.[3] It should be noted, however, that the initial steps to secure theseparks had been taken under the aldermanic form. In March 1913, the voters authorized the issuance of $135,000 in bonds for the construction of a modern up-to-date filtration plant with a daily capacity of 9,000,000 gallon per day. The contract has been let for this improvement, and Decatur will within a short time have a water plant adequately fitted to provide for all present and future needs of the city.[4]

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1. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, November 1, 1912. Council Proceedings, April 1912, p. 4; also for Jan.1912, p.4; June 1912, p.10, and Nov.1912, p.7.
2. Ibid, March 4, 1913.
3. Communication from W.F.Hardy, Man.Ed. Decatur Herald. (p.7.
4. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen; Coun.Proc.,Dec.1912,

With the rapid growth of population, the sewer system of Decatur has become inadequate, and the problem of the sanitary disposal of garbage has come to be a most pressing one. The Commissioners plan to relieve this situation as soon as possible by the erection of an intercepting sewer.[1] There has also been considerable activity in the line of repairing defective sidewalks and paving, and "the commission form of givernment has given Decatur what was it crying need - clean streets."[2] "The streets are cleaner than formerly," writes Professor A. F. Mills, "but this is due to more money and to the commissioner, who is always on the job, who is amply paid, and who takes pride in his work."[3] The streets were in very bad condition at the time the commission came into office in the Spring of 1911. Many of the streets had not been cleaned since October 1910, and the mud and refuse had become so firmly packed that the process of cleaning could be carried on only after a rain; and it was necessary to go over some of the streets two or more times. A total of $1,405.00 was expended for street cleaning alone during the first month under commission form, while about $2700 was spent during the same period for street cleaning and repairing combined.[4]

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1. Communication from Mayor Dan S. Dineen, Nov. 1, 1912 and March 4, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. W. F. Hardy, Managing Editor of The Decatur Herald; also Professo A. T. Mills, December 10, 1912.
3. Ibid.
4. Council Proceedings of Decatur, Illinois, for May 1911, p. 35-37.

From the above discussion of the commissioners' activity in the line of public improvements, we see that serious and careful attention has been given to the physical welfare of the city, and that future municipal development has also been taken into account by the present administration.

Public Health and Safety: The general principle of centralization of power and concentration of responsibility has been carried into the police and fire departments. The chief of each of the above branches selects the men subordinate to him, and "must produce the efficiancy for which he is responsible, unhampered by politics or any pull."[1] The concentration of control in the hands of the chief of police, and the chief of the fire department has greatly increased the efficiency of their respective departments, and the general reorganization of the public health and safety activities of the city has resulted in an enlargement of their scope. Today the policeman not only patrols his beat, but acts also as a health officer; while the duty of each fireman is not merely to fight fire, but by inspection and supervision to prevent and lessen the possibility of fires.

The police force consists of twenty patrolmen, twelve officers at night and eight in the day time. The patrolmen are selected by the chief of police; typewritten rules are issued for their guidance; written reports are required at

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1. Communication from Commissioner W. F. Shade, March 3, 1913.

frequent intervals, and they report each hour by telephone when on duty. The fire department is being rapidly equipped with motor apparatus to replace the old horse-power equipment, thus decreasing the cost of maintenance and reducing the fire loss. At present only one of the fire stations is equipped with horse-drawn apparatus. Within the past year a new fire station was erected at a cost of $4400.00, and equipped with automobile combination hose and chemical service.[1]

The improvements in the police and fire departments are due more to the efforts of the chief of police and the fire chief than to the activity of the commission on public health and safety. The latter official has placed the control of the fire and police departments in the hands of his principal subordinates, and depends upon them to perform most of the administrative work.

The activity of the health department during the last two years has included a careful inspection of all milk and dairies within a certain radius; an investigation of the water supply by a scientific analysis of all well and rain water; the cleaning of alleys; and a strict quarantine and fumigation in contagious diseases.[2] The work of the health division is, however, carried on according to the "small-town plan". There is no definitely organized health department as in

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1. Council Proceedings, Sept. 1912, p. 9.
2. Communication from Commissioner W. P. Shade, March 3, 1913,

Springfield, and there has been no attempt to work out a constructive health policy for the city. The most important improvement in the organization of the health work of Decatur has been the adoption of a plan whereby each policeman is constituted a health officer for his district. Neither has any provision been made for the sanitary disposal of garbage, and there is no prohibition against dumping such refuse in the vacant lots within the city.

Liquor Regulation:-

As said before the present commission is, with one exception, made up of "wet" men. "Where the question has been forced to the front", states the editor of the Decatur Review, "the division has been four to one, which was supposed to be the complexion of the commission at the time of the election. But 'wet' or 'dry' has almost no influence on the attitude of the commissioners toward their duties."[1] Before retiring from office the former council passed a very stringent ordinance for the regulation of saloons, which the present commission has not seen fit to repeal or alter. The commissioners have, instead, attempted to enforce the provision of this ordinance as faithfully as possible. Decatur voted for saloons only a few months before the commission form was adopted, after having been "dry territory" for two years. The above-mentioned regulatory ordinance seems to have resulted from an informal agreement with the "wets", carried out

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1. Mr. H. C. Schaub, Editor Decatur Review, March 3, 1913.

under pressure by the former mayor. Since a majority of the commissioners are liquor men, their sympathies are naturally in that direction, and a liberal sentiment prevails. This attitude is shown by the fact that the maximum limitation upon the number of saloons has been increased, and the hours of closing slightly changed to the advantage of the saloon keepers. On the other hand, one cannot say that there has been any marked laxity in the enforcement of the liquor code, and no favoritism is shown. Saloons have no screens or blinds, they close promptly at 11:30 o'clock, and are strictly closed on Sunday. No music, free lunches, upstairs connections, or toilet rooms are allowed; loitering is forbidden and the sale of liquor to minors is promtly met with the revocation of the offendor's license. There is no officially recognized or segregated vice district such as exists in Springfield, and all disorderly houses are closely watched.[1]

In the spring of 1912 the commissioner of public health and safety lost control of his department for a few weeks, and the town ran "wide-open". The people brought their complaints before the commissioners, the reorganization of the police department was effected, and a new chief put in charge, since which time conditions have been much better.[2] The same man who was chief of police during the

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1. Communication from Commissioner W. P. Shade, April 23, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. W. F. Hardy, Decatur Herald, Jan.31, 1913.

dry regime is now at the head of the police force, and is attempting to enforce the saloon and vice regulations as strictly as possible in a city where a liberal attitude exists. Jas. A. Corbett, President of the Citizens National Bank writes: "I have not heard of any serious breaking of the laws by the saloons. There have been some minor offenses, but the offender has been notified that by a repetition of the same offense he would cause his license to be cancelled."[1] "We comply strictly with the spirit of the ordinances", is the official view of Commissioner Shade, "and our saloons are absolutely closed on Sunday - there being no screens or hiding places connected with them -; and they are subject to revocation of license if convicted of violation."[2] One cannot say, however, that the liquor laws have been any more strictly enforced than they were during the last six or eight months under the aldermanic form when the city government was in the hands of an anti-saloon mayor.

Referendum: The referendum has been employed in Decatur on two different occasions. The first instance was in connection with a franchise authorizing the Vandalia Railroad Company to maintain a switch yard within the city. The ordinance was upheld by a vote of 1825 to 637 or by an approximate majority of three to one. The total vote, 2462, was approximately forty per cent of the total number of registered

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1. Communication from Mr.Jas.A.Corbett, January 8, 1913.
2. Communication from Commissioner W.P.Shade, November 1, 1912.

voters (6000).[1]

In March 1913 another referendum election was held to authorize: (1) the issuance of $135,000.00 in bonds for the erection of a filtration plant; and (2) a franchise giving certain rights and privileges to the Bell Telephone Company. The former was carried by a vote of 1917 to ~~1267~~ 1762, or by a slight majority of 155; while the latter proposition was defeated by a vote of 2665 to 404 or by a majority of over six to one. The total average vote was only forty per cent of the total number of registered voters. The telephone franchise was defeated because of objections to the rate clause, which permitted an increase in charges to an equivalent of those made by the corporation in the city of Springfield. The commissioners are at a loss for an explanation of the opposition to the bond issue, as it was commonly believed that a majority of the citizens were in favor of the improvement. It is said, however, that the water was exceedingly muddy on the day of the election because of a severe storm, and the rumor was spread about that the water department had purposely created such a condition in order to make the need for a filter plant appear greater.[2]

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1. City Clerk, April 3, 1913.
2. Ibid.

Summary

The general consensus of opinion among the citizens of Decatur is that the commission form has been a success, and as one editor expresses it, if the proposition were voted upon today nine-tenths of the people would favor its continuance. The present government has been more honest, more responsible and more business-like. The commissioners work together in harmony; give their undivided attention to the affairs of the city; and are as conscientiously interested in public affairs as they would be in their own businesses. Ward politics has been eliminated, there is no graft, and careful consideration has been given to the welfare of the city as a whole. The commissioners have been active in the field of progressive legislation, saloon regulations have been much better enforced than in Springfield and Rock Island; the fire and police departments have been reorganized and improvements are under way in the water works system. The improvements which have most commonly impressed a majority of citizens are the honesty of the municipal government; its responsiveness to the popular will; the quickness and despatch with which business is transacted; and the fact that the commissioner are "always on the job". On the other hand there has been only a slight advance in the financial condition of the city, modern methods of accounting have not been adopted; and little attention has been given to the working out of a comprehensive health program. The men elected as commissioners have not been of a new and extraordinary type, but are merely average men of average ability, who have learned by experience, and

who have "grown to their positions". In fact there are a number of prominent citizens of Decatur who were strongly opposed to the commission form of government at the time of its adoption, but who are today its most ardent supporters. Mr. Harry G. Webber, one of the prominent attorneys of Decatur, was two years ago an uncompromising opponent of commission government. At present he is an advocate of the new system, and attributes his change of attitude to the fact that he has seen the commission form of government "produce results".

II. Elgin.

Elgin with a population of 25,976 is the third largest city in Illinois under commission government. It is distinctly a manufacturing city, there being located within its limits one of the largest watch factories in the world, a shoe factory, shirt factory and a number of similar industries of more or less importance.

At the time of the adoption of the commission form in January 1911 there was no general dissatisfaction with the personnel of the city council, or with the work it was doing. The citizens of Elgin voted for the new form of government because they felt it would be an improvement over the aldermanic system, and would result in more efficient and responsible service to the public. The argument that a small number of men working at least six hours per day could produce better results than a council of fifteen serving only a part of the time appealed very favorably to the voters.[1] At a special election on January 21, 1911, the commission form was adopted by vote of 2228 to 1388 or by a majority of 840, the total vote (3616) being seventy-two per cent of the total number of registered voters.[2]

In the primaries there were ten candidates for mayor and fifty for the office of commissioner. At the final election a total vote of 4814 was cast, which was ninety-six per cent of the total number of registered voters of

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1. Communication from City Clerk, Feb. 18, 1913; also Mayor A. Fehrman, March 31, 1913.
2. Communication from the Hon.Mr.Frank W. Shepherd (Illinois State Legislature, 14th district), June 2, 1911.

the city.[1] The large number of candidates who sought places on the ballot, and the size of the vote polled at the general election, indicate that the great majority of the citizens of Elgin were especially interested in the commission form of government and in the election of the first set of officers under the new system. According to one correspondent a noticeable feature of the election for the adoption of the commission form, the primary, and the final election, was the absence of carriages, automobiles, and paid workers."[2]

The following men were elected as mayor and commissioners:

Mayor: Mr. Albert Fehrman.

Commissioners:

Mr. William F. Hunter

Mr. Charles L. Kohn

Mr. John O'Connell

Mr. John S. Russell

The mayor, Mr. Albert Fehrman, has been engaged in active business for a number of years. He is an ex-alderman and at the time of his election as commissioner of public affairs, was occupying for a second term the office of mayor.[3]

Commissioner William F. Hunter (Accounts and Finance)

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1. Communication from City Clerk, Feb. 18, 1913.
2. Communication from the Hon. Mr. F. W. Shepherd, June 2, 1911.
3. Communication from City Clerk, Feb. 18, 1913.

was, prior to his election, senior partner of the Hunter and Givens Loan and Insurance Company. Commissioner Hunter was at one time a member of the State Legislature, and "is well qualified for the position of Commissioner of Accounts and Finance."[1]

Commissioner Charles L. Kohn (Public Health and Safety) is a retired business man, a bank director, and an ex-alderman, and "looks well after the Department of Public Health and Safety."[2]

Commissioner John O'Connell (Streets and Improvement) when elected was proprietor of a cigar store, and his place of business was the general headquarters for political discussion and news." Commissioner O'Connell has been active in county and municipal politics, having served for several years on the County Board of Review, and as Commissioner of Special Assessments under the city government. Mr. O'Connell rendered unusually good service in both of these positions.[3]

Commissioner John S. Russell (Public Property) is a prominent contractor and builder, and well equipped for the position he is now occupying.[4]

The consensus of opinion in Elgin is that the people were more or less fortunate in their choice of commissioners.

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1. Communication from City Clerk, Feb. 18, 1913.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

At least three of the commissioners, from the standpoint of previous professional experience, are technically fitted for the positions to which they have been elected. All five have been successful in their private affairs and are, on the whole, men of executive ability. Mr. William Grote, former Mayor of Elgin, says "The men are superior to the average alderman. Under the aldermanic system sometimes very inferior men would be elected, which is not so easily done when the whole city has a voice in the matter. The men elected even under the commission form of government may not in all cases have the desired ability or previous business experience, but they are as a whole more capable than the average member of the former council."[1]

One cannot say, however, that the commission form of government has, as it is so often claimed for it, secured a new type of city officials, since all of the successful candidates have at some time or anothertaken active part in politics, and two have held positions as mayor or alderman. Although not belonging to a distinctly new class of municipal servants, the present commissioners are men of average ability, who gave honest service under the aldermanic regime, and who are trying to advance the welfare of the city and its citizens. Politics appears also to be absent from the city government. Unlike the situation prevailing in Springfield, Rock Island and Waukegan, the commissioners have from the very beginning

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1. Communication from ex-Mayor Wm. Grote, March 5, 1913; also from Mayor Fehrman, March 31, 1913.

acted in harmony with the exception of a few unimportant disagreements. The Secretary of the Elgin Commercial Club writing in June 1911, two months after the adoption of the commission form, said there was noticeable at that time a vast improvement in the operation of municipal affairs, and that each commissioner carried on the work of his department as conscientiously as if it were his own business.[1]

Writing again in November 1912, after a trial of a year and a half under commission form, the Treasurer of the Elgin Commercial Club speaks thus: "The Commission Form of Government is giving fairly good satisfaction, in fact as good as could be expected in a city of approximately 30,000 whereit would be difficult to please everybody. The finances of the city are in as good a condition as they were under the old aldermanic system and the commissioners work in harmony with the exception of a few minor tiffs."[2]

At the first regular meeting of the commissioners on May 1, 1911, the organization of the city government under the new form was perfected, and the appointive positions in the municipal service filled by unanimous action.[3] The salary of the mayor was fixed at $2500, and that of each commissioner at $2000 per annum, which is the maximum for cities between 20,000 and 30,000 population.[4] These officials must give at least six hours a day to their official duties.

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1. Communication from Mr. E. D. Howell, June 6, 1911.
2. Communication from Mr. Phil Freiler, November 1, 1912.
3. Summary of Proceedings of City Council of Elgin, May 1911.
4. "Ordinance fixing the Salaries of the Mayor and Commissioners", City Clerk's Journal, Vol. IX, p. 16.

The ordinance distributing the executive and administrative functions is very similar to that adopted in Springfield with the exception that the language of the provisions is more definite and exact.[1] Also the mayor in Elgin is given supervision over all public service utilities and all persons or corporations rendering service in the city under franchise, which duty is in Springfield assigned to the commissioner of streets and public improvements.[2] Although there is a close relation between the use of the streets and the activities of such public service corporations as street railway, telephone and gas companies it seems a better arrangement that the regulation of a matter of such vital interest to the city as a whole should be given to the mayor. In Springfield, the Cemetery Division is assigned to the mayor while in Elgin the supervision and control of cemeteries is in the hands of the commissioner of public property, which is also an improvement over the Springfield method of distribution. The council of Elgin, recognizing the similarity of work in the departments of streets and public improvements and public property, has provided that the commissioners of the former department shall have such assistance from the city engineer and commissioner of public property as may be necessary in the laying out of improvements.[3] The parks of Elgin are not controlled by a separate park-board as in Springfield, but are under the supervision of the commissioner of public

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1. City Clerk's Journal, Vol. IX, p. 11-14.
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3. "Ordinances apportioning the Executive and Administration Powers", City Clerk's Journal, Vol. IX, p. 14.

property.[1] This seems to be the better arrangement for a small city, as it leads to a more centralized and economical administration, and also lessens the possibility of corruption and mismanagement.

The printed reports published by the Elgin commissioners are much in advance of those prepared by the Springfield, or Decatur councils. The Elgin government publishes in addition to the "Monthly Proceedings of the Council", a pamphlet called the "City Clerk's Journal", an annual auditor's report, and an annual report of the Department of Streets and Public Improvements. The monthly account of proceedings contains, as well a statement of receipts and expenditures and the condition of the various special funds of the city. A distinction is made in these reports between the total expenditures and receipts, andthe actual revenue and expenses of government, these two items being placed in separate and distinct accounts. The City Clerk's Journal contains, in addition to a record of the acts of the Council, the text of all ordinances passed by that body. In each of these publications the proceedings are not recorded merely in chronological order according to meetings, but under general headings. For instance all petitions and communications presented are placed under one heading, all reports under another, etc. With such an arrangement it is much easier for the city official or interested citizen to locate

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1. "Ordinances apportinning the Executive and Administrative Powers", City Clerk's Journal, Vol. IX, p. 14.

any special matter, than in the pamphlet issued by the Springfield commission where the reader must search out the information for himself. The annual auditor's report and the report of the commissioner of public works are carefully prepared, containing a detailed analysis of all receipts and expenditures, and presenting in a rather clear and concise manner a summary of the sources of revenue, the purposes for which money was expended, and the cost of services rendered and received. In general the methods of municipal accounting and reporting are in advance of those employed in other commission cities of Illinois, although they are by no means perfect.

Financial Administration: The finances of Elgin were in fairly good condition when the commissioners came into office - a state of affairs not found in a majority of the Illinois cities which have adopted commission government.[1] The city proper has no bonded debt, the only bonded indebtedness being that of $124,000 for the waterworks. The total corporate assets of the city at the close of the last fiscal year were $557,549.94 and the total liabilities of the city corporate $12,934.97, leaving a surplus of corporate assets over liabilities in the amount of $544,614.97. The consolidated balance sheet presents a surplus of assets over liabilities in the sum of $1,044,618.06.[2] The total corporate revenue for the first year under the commission form in Elgin

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1. Auditors Report for the Year ending December 31, 1911.
2. Ibid p. 10.

amounted to $190,369.50 (including the miscellaneous revenue and the general tax levy), and the total corporate expenses to $178,081.40, leaving a surplus of revenue over expenses in the amount of $12,288.10.[1] The total disbursements as per the treasurer's record for the first fiscal year under the commission form were $335,004.40, and the total receipts $377,725.39, leaving a balance at the end of the year 1911 of $42.721.19.[2]

There were no outstanding anticipation tax warrants on December 31, 1911, and the city treasurer carried over a cash balance of $4,364,86 in the corporate fund.[3] For three years prior to the adoption of the commission form the city has found it necessary to issue warrants before the close of the fiscal year in anticipation of the collection of city taxes, and has not since 1907 had a cash balance in the corporate fund at the end of the year.[4] The above figures show that Elgin during the first year under commission government lived within her revenue. The following is a comparative statement of the anticipation warrants outstanding, and the corporate fund balance at the end of each fiscal year for the period from 1906 to 1911:[5]

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1. Auditor's Report for the year ending Dec. 31, 1911, p. 4.
2. Ibid, p. 46.
3. Ibid, p. 5.
4. Ibid.
5. Summary of Proceedings of Elgin Council, December 1911.

Year	Anticipation Warrants	Cash in Corporate Fund End of Year
1906	$ 2,250.00	
1907		$ 3,690.11
1908	6,860.26	
1909	13,465.35	
1910	4,993.01	
1911		4,364.86

A comparative table of miscellaneous revenue for corporate purposes for the years 1908-1911, and a similar table of expenses corporate for the same period show a decrease of $2,531.69 in the revenue for 1911 as compared with the revenue received in 1910.[1]

The corporate expenses, on the other hand, show a decrease of $5,869.22 as compared with those for the preceding year.[2]

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1. Auditor's Report 1911, p. 5.
2. Comparative Table of Miscellaneous Revenue 1906-1911.

Year		
1906	$44,295.99	
1907	49,971.58	
1908	56,285,97	
1909	56,604.10	
1910	63,834.13	
1911	61,311.44	Decreased revenue $2,531.69

Comparative Table of Corporate Expenses 1906-1911.

Year		
1906	$146,846.78	
1907	155,557.95	
1908	171,539.08	
1909	174,601.45	
1910	183,950.62	
1911	178,081.40	Decreased corporate expenses $5,869.22.

An analysis of the finances during the second year under commission form, or the year ending December 31, 1912, shows that the finances continue in a good condition, and that certain advancements have been made during the year. The total miscellaneous revenue for corporate purposes (does not include general taxes or water revenue) was in 1912 $82,753.07 or $21,442.63 more than in 1911.[1] It should be noted, however, that these figures include revenue in the amount of $27,000 received from the gas company in lieu of its franchise.[2] The expenses for corporate purposes were in 1912 $197,865 as against $177.081.40 in 1911, or an increased total expense of $19,784.15.[3] The total receipts for 1912 were $369,335.97, or $26,452.44 more than in 1911.[4] The total expenditures were $343,855.57 as compared with $335,004.40 in 1911, thus indicating that during the second

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1. Summary of Proceedings and Monthly Statements of Receipts and Expenditures, January 1912, to January 1913.
2, 3 and 4 on next page.

year under commission form, the city spent $8,851.17 more than during the first.[5] Adding to the total receipts for 1912 the balance of $42,721.19 on hand at the beginning of the year, we find that on December 30, 1912 there was a balance of $68,201.59 in the hands of the treasurer or an increase of $15,480.40 over the balance of the preceding year.[6]

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2. Total Miscellaneous Revenue for Corporate Purposes 1910-12

1910	$63,843.13	
1911	61,311.44	Decrease $2,531.69.
1912	82,753.07	Increase $21,442.63.

3. Total Expenses for Corporate Purposes 1910-12.

1910	$183,950.62	
1911	178,081.40	Decrease in expenses $5,869.22.
1912	197,865,55	Increase in expenses $19,784.15.

4. Total Receipts 1910-12 (exclusive of Balances from previous year.)

1910	$342,	
1911	342,883.53	
1912	369,335.97	Increase receipts $26,452.44.

5. Total Expenditures 1910-12.

1910		
1911	$335,004.41.	
1912	343,855.57.	

6. Balance (surplus of receipts over expenditures) at end of years 1910-12.

1910	$28,982.20	
1911	42,721.19	
1912	68,201.59	Increase balance $15,480.40.

On December 21, 1912, there were no warrants on the treasury outstanding, while the warrants for collection amounted to only $710.65.[1] Under commission form Elgin has not had any anticipation warrants outstanding against it at the close of the fiscal year, while duing the last three years under the aldermanic system the amount of indebtedness in the form of tax warrants varied from $6,860.00 to $13,500.00.[2] At the close of the year 1912 for the third time in seven years, the corporate fund presented a cash balance; the two previous occasions being in 1907 and again in 1911, the first year under commission form.[3] We also find that the water-bond sinking fund has increased from $2,178.66 in 1911 to $10,898 in 1912, or an increase of $8,719.34; while the securities in the fireman pension fund, the police pension fund, and the Bluff City Cemetery fund have increase during the year 1912 in the amounts of $2,059.51; $2,800 and $4,895.82 respectively.[4] These figures show that during the second year of the administration of the commissioners, the city lived within its revenue, accumulated no floating debt, and increased the sinking fund for the payment of the bonded debt by almost $9,000.00.

From the rather meagre figures with which one not on the field must content oneself, Elgin's finances seem to

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1. Summary of Proceedings of Elgin Council, December 1912.
2. Ibid, December 1911.
3. Ibid, December 1911 and December 1912.
4. Ibid, December 1912.

be in much better shape than those of the other large cities of Illinois which are operating under commission form. Within the past two years there has been no increase in the bonded debt, and an adequate sinking fund is being accomodated for the reduction of the existing bonded indebtedness; the city has no floating debt; and it has not been necessary to resort to anticipation warrants. The expenses for corporate purposes have been somewhat greater than under the aldermanic system due chiefly to the increased salaries paid to the city officials; but the corporate revenue has on the otherhand increased so as to offset or at least equalize the added expense. But we cannot say that the present financial status of the city is due especially to the new form of government, or that there has been any extraordinary advance in the financial condition of the municipality during the period under commission government. The commissioners found the finances in satisfactory shape, and the problem which they have had to solve cannot compare with those confronted in Springfield, Rock Island, Waukegan and other cities.

John L. Walker and Company, auditors, have the following to say regarding the general financial status of the city, and the methods of accounting employed during the first year under commission form: "We are pleased to note that during 1911 the audited vouchers and payrolls for each month agreed to a cent with the authorized amounts shown in the council proceedings. In the period previously covered by us some discrepancies in this connection were noted.

We also find that all vouchers and payrolls are properly approved for payment by the commissioner in charge of the department affected, and that the general accuracy of the clerical work is good."[1]

Public Improvements: "A great deal of fault is being found on account of there not being as many public improvements as some had expected," writes the treasurer of the Elgin Commercial Club. "We are backward in a great many civic improvements, which however cannot be remedied by any form of government as long as a great many of the wealthy citizens are contented to live in a backwoods town and will fight any proposition for public improvements that will add to their taxes."[2]

In any city the amount of public improvements such as paving, sewer construction, and the building of sidewalks does not depend upon the form of government but upon public demand and necessity. It might be well, however, to take notice of the extent of this activity in Elgin within the past two years. During the first year under commission form very little paving was done. The greatest activity of the public works department was in the way of cleaning, repairing and grading unpaved streets, a total of $8,107.92 being spent for these purposes.[3] About 91,688 square

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1. Annual Auditor's Report (John L. Walker and Co.) 1911, p.8.
2. Communication from Mr. Phil. Freiler, Treaurer Elgin Commercial Club, November 1, 1912.
3. Report of Department of Streets and Public Improvements 1911, p. 23.

feet of sidewalk were laid in 1911 under the supervision of the street department.[1] In the same year some 7010 lineal feet of sewer were installed at a cost of $5,458.95, or an average of $.778 per foot as against an average price of $.804 during the last year of the aldermanic form, thus presenting a slight decrease in average expenditure.[2]

During 1912 there has been an increase in the number of public improvements although not so great as some have desired. Ordinances were passed in 1912 for the paving of four districts, and the contract price for the two largest of these improvements amounted to a total of $87,302.52.[3] In September 1912 the contract was let for the erection of a storm and sanitary sewer which should cost approximately $69,105.00.[4] In addition to the above, a large number of sidewalks have been constructed and improvements made in the water course of North Elgin to the value of $3475.[5] The above improvements, however, have been made possible by special assessment, and indicate an improvement over the aldermanic system only insofar as they have involved a more careful supervision and inspection of work done.

Public Health and Safety: Within recent years Elgin has had no serious difficulty in securing the enforcement of her ordinances. The present mayor was mayor under

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1. Report of Department of Streets and Public Improvements 1911 p.22.
2. Ibid p. 32.
3. Summary of Proceedings of Elgin Council.
4. Ibid September 1912.
5. Ibid.

the aldermanic form and three of the commissioners were at some time or another members of the city council. These men demanded a rather strict enforcement of the laws under the former plan of government, and are attempting to do likewise today. "Our city", says the treasurer of the Elgin Commercial Club", has always had the reputation of being one of the best cities in the state morally, as well as having the best average lot of liquor dealers that can be found anywhere. In a city of this kind it is not a difficult matter to enforce the closing laws and keep the lid on."[1] Mr. William Grote, former Mayor of Elgin, bears similar testimony when he says, "The ordinances in our city are well enforced, and there are not a number of aldermen who can use their influence to prevent the enforcement."[2] In cases where neglect has been shown it has been possible to trace the responsibility to the proper party and thus secure the speedy remedy.

The police force consists of twenty patrolmen who are selected upon an examination by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. Printed rules are issued for the guidance of the policemen, and the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety has the following to say regarding the general plan of discipline; "Kindness is employed at first to bring the men to a right idea of their duty. This method

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1. Communication from Mr. Phil. Freiler, Treas. Elgin Commercial Club, Nov. 1, 1912.
2. Communication from ex-Mayor Wm. Grote, March 5, 1913.

failing, punishment is meted out in the form of charges which give them undesirable notoriety." Frequent reports are required of the patrolmen as to conditions prevailing in their respective districts. The total number of arrests is small as compared with the total population, and there has been a slight decrease in the number under commission government, there being 468 arrests in 1911-12 as compared with 489 in 1910-11.[1]

Referendum in Elgin: The referendum has been invoked in Elgin on three different occasions, the principal question presented each time being the granting of a franchise to the Western United Gas and Electric Company. The old franchise expired in December 1910, and the question of granting a new one was under consideration by the mayor and city council for about two years, but no agreement could be reached between the company and the special committee of aldermen.[2] Under the commission form, the "gas question" was taken up, but not until June 1912 did the commissioners decide to present an ordinance to the voters.[3] In drawing up the gas ordinance much time and care was expended by the commissioners. An attempt was made to secure such data as was needed from other cities, and from state laws governing public utilities; while information as to the municipal regulation of quality, distribution, and the testing of meters was obtained from the

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1. Communication from Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, April 23, 1913.
2. Communication from City Clerk, February 2, 1913.
3. Summary of Proceedings of Elgin Council, June 1912.

United States Bureau of Standards.[1] Numerous conferences were held with representatives of the gas company, the commissioners arguing for eight-five cent gas and a twenty year grant without a so-called "perpetual rights clause"; while the company on the other hand refused to accept a rate lower than ninety cents unless an "equal rights clause" were provided; which would in effect make the grant perpetual and exclusive. After studying the proposition from various points of view, and framing as stringent a law as possible for the protection of the consumer's rights as to quality, pressure, meter testing, the laying of mains, etc., the commissioners decided to submit to a referendum vote a franchise which should terminate absolutely in forty years, providing for a ninety cent rate at present with the privilege of fixing the rate anew every five years, and a consideration of $65,000 for stand pipe purposes.[2] The events connected with the framing of this gas franchise lead one to conclude that the company was more successful in its demands than the city officials. The ordinance was at fault in that it contemplated a grant for too long a period; whether or not the maximum rate of ninety cents was too high, and whether or not the gas company could have received a just compensation at a rate of eighty five cents is is beyond our power to state. In other respects the gas ordinance was carefully and accurately drawn up, and advantageous to the consumer and the city.

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1. Special Pamphlet issued by the Commissioners, June 1912.
2. Pamphlet published by order of the Elgin Council, June 1912.

The date for the referendum on the "gas question" was fixed as June 29, 1912, and in addition two other propositions were submitted to the voters. For fifty years the city of Elgin has had an ordinance prohibiting theatres and places of amusement from keeping open on Sunday. As the "personal-liberty" people could not agree upon this matter of public policy, a petition was presented to the commissioners in April 1912 calling for an amendment to the existing ordinance which would remove the inhibition upon Sunday closing. The amendment, following its defeat in the council by a vote of three to two, was presented to the voters of the city together with the gas proposition and a third proposition as to whether or not the city should be compelled to buy voting machines.[1]

In conformity with a resolution of the council, the commissioner of Accounts and Finance and the City Clerk gave publicity to the three questions in each daily paper, and in a fourteen page pamphlet which contained an introduction by the commissioners, sample ballots, and a full text of the proposed ordinances. The results of the election held on June 29, 1912, were as follows:[2]

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1. Summary of Proceedings of Elgin Council, June 1912.
2. City Clerk's Journal, Vol. IX, p. 240-242.

Proposition	Yes	No	Total	Majority
Gas Franchise	1318	2816	4134	against 1498
Purchase of Voting Machines	2943	1211	4154	for 1722
Adoption of amendment removing Sunday closing prohibition	2550	1674	4224	for 876

The gas franchise was defeated by a majority of 1498, or approximately by a vote of two to one; the proposition providing for the purchase of voting machines was carried by a majority of 1722, and the amendment removing the existing prohibition against Sunday amusements was upheld by a 876 majority. The average total vote was 4170 which is eighty-three and four tenths per cent of the total number of registered voters (5000). The fact that there is such a variation in the number of negative and affirmative votes indicates that the people did not vote mechanically and without discrinination; while the size of the vote itself shows the extent to which the citizens were interested in the matters presented. By this referendum election the the action of the commisioners in framing the gas franchise was repudiated, their stand against the Sunday closing proposition was overridden by popular action; and the proposition compelling the city to purchase voting machines, which had been initiated by the voters, was upheld by them at the polls. The principal objections made to the gas franchise were: (1) that the forty year grant was excessive, and(2) that the lower rate was more desirous than a bonus of $65,000.[1]

1. Communication from City Clerk, February 7, 1913.

The initial experience with the initiative and referendum in Elgin demonstrated the efficiency of these provisions as means of securing desired legislation, and their usefulness in giving the people an opportunity to express their opinions upon matters of important public policy. It cannot be said , however, that the people were justified in voting for the removal of the prohibition on Sunday closing , as there is a State statute which forbids the keeping of places of amusement etc. open on the Sabbath.

Following the defeat of the gas franchise another ordinance was passed providing for a twenty year grant, a bonus of $25,000, the payment of $1,000 for the use of the streets during the period when the company had operated without a franchise, and an" equal rights clause" giving the company the same priveleges as might be granted to any competing corporation.[1] This ordinance was presented to the voters on August 29, 1912, and apparently little interest was taken, as a total of only 540 votes were cast, 199 in favor of the proposition and 341 against.[2] Again, the ordinance was opposed because it did not reduce the price of gas. A vote which is ten per cent of the registered vote cannot be taken, however, as an adequate indication of the will of the great mass of voters, altho it is probable that the measure would have been defeated even if

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1.Communication from City Clerk, February 7,1913.
2.Summary of proceedings of Elgin, Council of August 1912.

a larger number had gone to the polls.

A third ordinance was prepared providing for a $25,000 bonus to be paid by the gas company and the payment of $2,000 for the use of the streets during the period when the company had possessed no franchise. The rate however, remained at ninety cents.[1] This ordinance was submitted at the polls on December 3, 1912, and an especial effort was made to get out the vote. As a result, a total vote of 2245 was cast, 1494 in favor and 747 against; the majority in favor being 747 greater than the negative vote.[2] The total number of votes cast at the election was 1889 less than that registered at the first referendum on the proposition, and was only forty five per cent of the total number of registered voters, as compared with a percentage of approximately eighty five per cent cast at the earlier election.

Thus we find the citizens of Elgin employing the referendum in order to secure more advantageous terms with a powerful public service corporation which had been operating for almost three years without a franchise, and with which the former council had been unable to come to any definite arrangement. The people were unsuccessful, however, in their attempt to secure a reduced gas rate.

In conclusion it can be said that Elgin is generally well pleased with the present form of government,

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1. City Clerks Journal, Vol. IX. p. 307-315.
2. Ibid, p. 315.

and that the system has operated with greater success in that city than in the majority of Illinois municipalities operating under commission form of government. The success of the commission form in Elgin has been due not only to the plan itself, but also to the healthy financial condition of the city at the time commission form of government was adopted; and to the fact that the men elected have on the whole been able and efficient administrators. Commission government in Elgin has had an opportunity to operate under conditions which have been more favorable than those found in those communities which have ~~which have~~ adopted the new system as a means of relief from graft, politics and municipal indebtedness. The people of Elgin were attracted to the commission form of govenent mainly because they believed it was more business-like and offered greater possibilities for municipal developement. They were not looking forward to any great change such as the elimination of corruption and the establishment of the city's credit as did the people of Springfield, Decatur, Rock Island and Waukegan. There has been no popular disappointment therefore, arising from the fact that anticipated reforms have not been completely realized. The experience of Elgin with government by commission can be adequately summed up in the statement of a former mayor of that city: " Commission government has been an important improvement, and is very much superior to the old system. Aldermen receive so little pay and devote so little time,

as a rule, to the work of the city that the same does not receive the proper care and business-like management it deserves. The commissioners can act more quickly, and get more done in less time, and the public knows where to look and whom to hold responsible. There is no shifting of responsibility which was often done under the aldermanic system."[1]

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1. Communication from ex-Mayor Grote, March 5, 1913.

III. Moline.

Moline, a city of 24,199 population, is situated on the Mississippi River in the northwestern part of Illinois, and is an important manufacturing town, one of the largest plow and implement factories in the world being located within its limits.

Local conditions in Moline prior to the adoption of the commission form, although not comparable to those which existed at that time in the neighboring city of Rock Island, were not very promising. The aldermen were dominated by the mayor; municipal affairs were conducted in a loose and unbusiness-like manner; there were open charges of graft; franchises were granted without compensation; and saloons were kept open beyond the legal hours and on Sunday.[1] Influenced by the agitation for commission goverment in the near-by municipality of Rock Island, and believing that the new system would be an improvement, the citizens of Moline during the winter of 1910-1911 began a campaign for its adoption.

At a special election on January 3, 1911, commission government was adopted by a vote of 1491 to 962, or by a majority of 529, the total vote (2453) being forty-four per cent of the total number of registered votes.[2] There were eight candidates for mayor and 57 for commissioners at the primary election on February 28, 1911. At the final election

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1. Communication from Mr. C. F. Grantz, Secretary of Moline Club, May 27, 1911.
2. Communication from City Clerk, April 9, 1913.

on April 4, 1911, a total vote of 4897 was cast for mayor, the two candidates being Mr. Martin R. Carlson and Mr. Olson. Mr. Carlson received a total vote of 2910 while Mr. Olson, who was seeking reelection for the fourth consecutive term, received a vote of 1937. The total vote cast for mayor (4897) was eighty-seven per cent of the total number of registered votes.[1] The following men were declared elected as commissioners:

Mr. C. V. Johnson (Accounts and Finance)
Mr. E. L. Eastman (Public Health and Safety)
Mr. C. G. Anderson (Streets and Public Improvements)
Mr. L. O. Jahns (Public Property)

Mayor-Commissioner Martin R. Carlson was proprietor of a book and stationery supply house, and had never before served on the city council. Commissioner C. V. Johnson (Accounts and Finance) was a shipping clerk for the Moline Plow Company, and had ten years experience as a member of the council, serving at various times as chairman of the finance, fire, and water and light committee. Commissioner Eastman (Public Health and Safety) was in the insurance and real estate business, and had no former connection with the board of aldermen or the municipal service. Commissioner Anderson (Streets and Public Improvements) was a civil engineer and for six years prior to election held the position of city engineer. He was regarded as being especially

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1. Communication from City Clerk, April 9, 1913.
2.

qualified for the department assigned to him. Commissioner Jahns (Public Property), was an insurance agent, and although possessing no technical knowledge as to the administration of a water or lighting system, has proved to be a very efficient commissioner.[1] With perhaps one or two exceptions, the Commissioners do not possess any special qualifications judged from the standpoint of wide executive ability and broad business experience. They have, however, been very successful in their limited fields of endeavor, are capable, aggressive and public-spirited. The commissioners were not politicians, they came almost entirely from a new type of office-holders, were unquestionably honest, and of high standing in the community. The success of commission government in Moline has been due in large part to the able men who have been chosen to administer the affairs of the municipality.[2]

The people of Moline seem to be well pleased with the men elected. The editor of the Moline Mail published the following: "We are fortunate in having an especially conscientiousness set of commissioners, and thereby hangs the success of the commission form of government. They are men of ability, and we have no implication of the recall, although of course practical politicians are not altogether happy. The commissioners do not attempt to excuse themselves or dodge responsibility. The only criticism I could make is that they are overly conscientious, and try hard to please

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1. Communication from City Clerk, April 9, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. Wm. Butterworth, Pres.Deere & Co., April 24, 1913.

everyone, as was noticed in the determination of a site for the new City Hall. All in all, Moline is very well pleased.[1] The editor of the Moline Despatch stated: "There is at present noticeably lacking the system of rewards at the city expense for political fine work on behalf of a party or an individual."[2] Criticism has been made, however, of the fact that some of the commissioners, although receiving salaries of $2000 per year, are interested to a large extent in their personal affairs and have delegated much of the routine business to subordinates.[3] The commission government law does not, however, require commissioners to give more than six hours per day to their official duties, and does not in any way forbid them from engaging in other pursuits.

Financial Administration: The commissioners inherited a large deficit from the previous administration. The unpaid bills on May 1, 1911, amounted to $19,246.09, and other bills were later presented which materially increased this amount.[4] In addition, some $18,000 of the 1911 tax money had been turned over to the aldermen and mayor by the city collector. At the close of the first year under commission form the floating debt had been entirely eliminated, and there was no floating indebtedness outstanding against the city.[5] The bonded debt at the time the commissioners came into office

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1. Illinois State Register (Springfield, Ill.) Oct. 6, 1912.
2. Ibid.
3. Communication from Mr. C. F. Grantz, Sec.Moline Club, Dec. 30, 1912.
4. Proceedings of City Council, June 1911. Auditor's report for 1910-11, p.39.
5. Communication from Commissioner of Accts. & Finance, Feb.1, 1913.

amounted to $73,000, while $100,000 in bonds for the erection of a city hall had been authorized but not issued, making the actual bonded debt $173,000. During the first year under commission form $15,000 of the bonded indebtedness was paid off, the bonded debt at the close of that period being $158,000.[1] Within the present year the bonded debt has been increased to $307,000 by issuing $164,000 in bonds for the improvement and extension of the waterworks system. Such a step was necessary because the waterworks had been allowed to deteriorate and to fall into disrepair during former administrations. While increasing the bonded debt for permanent improvements, the commissioners have during the present year paid off another $15,000 of the old debt.[2]

"In the aggregate the expenditures are about the same as under the aldermanic regime."[3] Some departments show an increase and others a decrease, but it is almost impossible to make comparisons with former administrations because of the different divisions of the departments of government and the adoption of new methods of accounting. The total cash expenditures for 1910-11 were $362,105 as compared with $366,373 in 1911-12, or an increase of $4,268 during the first year under commission form. The total cash receipts for 1910-11 were $334,968.56, while in 1911-12 these were $486,291.83. Of the receipts for 1911-12 $102,230.76 were derived from the sale

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1. Proceedings of City Council, May 1912. Auditor's report, 1911-12, p.180.
2. Proceedings of City Council.
3. Communication from Commissioner of Acct. and Finance, Feb. 1, 1913.

of bonds, and deducting this amount to make the cash receipts comparable, the total cash receipts for 1911-12 were $379,061.06, or an increase of $44, 092.50 over those of 1910-11. The cash balance in the hands of the Treasurer at the close of the last year under the aldermanic form was $8,735.72; while at the end of the first year under commission form it was $128.301.42. Subtracting, however, from this sum $102,230.76 (the amount of the city hall bond account), the true cash balance for current expense at the end of the first year of commission government was $26,070.42, or $17,687.99 larger than that of the preceding year.[1]

The revenues for corporate purposes (not including waterworks) have in the aggregate remained about the same, the revenue from the general tax levy and miscellaneous sources being $207,519.00 in 1911-12, as compared with $202,345.74 in 1910-11, or a slight increase of $5,173.26 during the first year under commission form.[2]

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2. Revenue - Corporate Purposes

	1910-11	1911-12	Increase
Tax	$125,737.00	$131,625.00	$5,888.00
Liquor license	63,126.00	63,126.00	
Plumbing license	1,090.00	1,161.00	71.00
Insurance tax	1,189.86	2,384.03	1,199.17
Scale book	5,042.72		
Miscellaneous	6,165.16	7,665.00	1,499.84
Interest on city deposits		1,557.97	1,557.97
Total	$202,345.74	$207,519.00	$5,173.20

The total expenditures for corporate purposes (not including waterworks) for the last twelve months under the aldermanic regime was $210,363.34; and in 1911-12 they were $219,394.67, showing an increase in total expenditures for corporate purposes of $9,031.33 during the first year under commission government. The expenses of the waterworks department for 1911-12 were practially the same as in 1910-11, while on the other hand the revenue from the sale of water increased by $12,745.03 in 1911-12.[1] During the first year under commission form most of the important sources of revenue yielded larger sums. In addition to the increase in water collections the insurance tax presented an increase of $1,199.17; the miscellaneous revenue was $1,489.84 larger than in 1910-11, and $1,557.97 was derived from interest on city deposits.[2]

Thus it is seen that the finances of Moline are in fairly good shape, and that there has been "a healthy readjustment", and an establishment of the credit of the city during the past two years.[3]

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1. Expenses - Waterworks

Expenses 1910-11	$35,284.51	
Expenses 1911-12	35,516.59	Increase $232.08

Revenue from sale of water.

Revenue 1910-11	$38,731.56	
Revenue 1911-12	51,476.59	Increase $12,745.03

2. See Council Proceedings for June 1911 and May 1912. Auditor's Reports for 1910-11, 1911-12.

3. Editor P. S. McGlynn (Moline Daily Despatch) Illinois State Register, October 6, 1912.

Public Improvements.

The Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements writes that there is little difference in the amount of paving and other public improvements constructed under the two forms of government. The form of government has generally no bearing upon the amount and character of public improvements as popular demand usually determines these matters; and they are procurable as readily under one form as another. The important feature in street improvements, repair, and cleaning is that "greater attention is paid to efficiency and details of work, with the result that more and better service has been obtained for the same expenditure".

The commissioners upon coming into office found that the waterworks system had been allowed to deteriorate, and to fall into a state of disrepair. For some time the aldermen had had under consideration a general improvement of the water works, but no definite action was taken beyond a recommendation by a special council committee that the intake be extended to a certain island in the Mississippi River.[1] The commissioners realized the need for an immediate betterment of the water supply, but decided to proceed only after a careful study and investigation of the situation. A daily analysis of the river water over a period of six or eight months showed that the supply at the present intake was as pure as that at the proposed site, and that there was therefore no need of moving

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1. Council Proceedings, February 1912, p 129-130.

the intake as recommended by the previous administration.[1] Following this decision, the Commissioners planned a general reorganization and reconstruction of the waterworks system, and in March 1912 the consulting engineer presented a report of the improvements necessary to place the plant in first class condition. The proposed extensions included new boiler, pumps and chimneys at the pumping station, additional reservoirs, the general repair of the filter plant, and an enlargement of the intake all to cost approximately $164,000.[2] At a special election on July 1912 a bond issue of $ 164,000 was authorized (by a vote of three to one) for the purpose of meeting these improvements, which at the present time are being rapidly carried toward completion.[3] Other improvements include a motor hose wagon purchased for the fire department at a cost of $3300, an automobile, costing $1244, for the use of the street department, and a new street flusher.[4]

At the Spring election in April 1910 the citizens of Moline authorized $100,000 in bonds for the purpose of erecting a city hall. The commissioners, however, delayed action in issuing these bonds, preferring if it were necessary to improve the waterworks rather than build a municipal hall. When it was found that there was no necessity for constructing a new water intake, the Council in March 1912 issued and sold $100,000

1-Ibid.
2-Council Proceedings, March 1912, p 146.
3-Ibid, July 1912, p.212.
4-Ibid, June 1912, p.200; March 1912,

in city hall bonds.[1] The selection of a site for this building was under consideration for about four months before a final choice was made, the delay and apparent hesitancy in this matter being due, it is said, to a desire of the commissioners to make such a determination as would be acceptable to the great majority of citizens.[2]

The Moline City Council has been interested not only in the administrative phase of city government, but has also given active attention to progressive municipal legislation. A new health ordinance has been adopted;[3] regulations regarding weights and measures and creating an inspector of the same have been passed;[4] the sale of impure milk has been prohibited;[5] and an ordinance has been adopted which provides for the sanitary condition of bakeries; and regulating the location of laundries,, livery stables, blacksmith shops, foundries etc.[7] In November 1911 the Tri-City Federation of Labor presented a petition asking for the establishment of a public market, and in April 1912 a warehouse was bought by the city, and converted into a municipal market.[8] This new type of public utility has during the short period of its operation in Moline been more or less of a success--both from a financial standpoint and ffom the broader viewpoint of its usefulness to the citizens.

1-Ibid, Jan. 1912, p 120-121.
2-Council Proceedings, March-July 1912
3-Council Proceedings, August 1911 p.66.
4-Council Proceedings, October 1911 p. 90.
5-Council Proceedings, May, 1911 p.24.
6-Council Proceedings, March 1912, p.143.
7- " " " " "
8-Council Proceedings, Nov. 1911 p. 101 and April 1912,-p 160.

Referendum in Moline.

The referendum has been applied in Moline to two classes of propositions--to authorize the issuance of water-works bonds, and to permit the granting of several franchises. The Central Union Telephone Company, for several years prior to the adoption of the commission form, had been operating without a franchise. In March 1910 a franchise ordinance was presented to the Mayor and board of aldermen, but no definite action was taken. The service became very poor and the company attempted to shift the blame for such conditions to the city officials because of their refusal to grant the proposed franchise.[1] In June 1911 the Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements moved the repeal of the franchise, which had been proposed in March 1912, and requested the telephone company to submit "another proposition which would insure first class service without a sacrifice of public rights".[2] It was a year later, however, (June 1912) before the commissioners finally adopted an ordinance granting a twenty five year franchise to the Central Union Telephone Company; while the latter agreed to pay $4000 in cash to the city.[3] In the meantime quo warranto proceedings were commenced against the company by the municipal authorities, and the company in turn secured an injunction against the city officials; both of which proceedings were dismissed following the popular election in the summer of 1912.[4]

1-Council Proceedings, June 1911, p. 35.
2- " " , June 1911, p. 35.
3- " " , June 1912, p.199.
4- " " , Aug. 1912, p.223.

In May 1912 a petition was also presented by a number of citizens requesting that a franchise be granted to the Tri-City Automatic Telephone Co. within thirty days, or that the question be presented to a vote of the people. On July 23, 1912 these two franchise ordinances were submitted to the voters together with a third proposition for the authorization of $164,000 in city bonds. The following vote was cast on these ordinances:-[1]

1. The granting of 25 year franchise to the Central Union Telephone Company.

Yes-384. No.-714. Majority for-72. Total-1501.

2. The granting of 25 year franchise to the Tri-City Automatic Telephone Company.

Yes.-1747. No.-301. Majority for-1436 or 6-1. Total.-2048.

3. The issuing of $164,000 in waterworks improvements bonds.

Yes.-1528. No.-593. Majority for-935. or 3 to 1. Total.-2121.

An average total vote of 1890 was cast, which is 34% of the total number of registered voters. The largest total vote, 2121, was 89% of the total number of registered voters. The variation in the total number of votes polled on the various propositions indicates; (1) that there was greater opposition to the Central Union Telephone franchise, and (2) that over 500 persons who voted on the last two propositions did not register their opinion in regard to the Central Union Telephone franchise.

1-Council Proceedings, July 1912. -. 212-213.

The referendum was used a second time in the fall of 1912. In August of that year the Moline, Rock Island and Elgin Traction Co. petitioned the commissioners for permission to operate an interurban line on certain streets of the city, and at the same time the Tri-City Railway Co. asked for permission to conduct and operate a double or single track street railway for a period of twenty years. Ordinances granting these privileges were passed by the commissioners and presented to the electors at the regular election on November 5, 1912. The following results were obtained.[1]

1. Granting the right to the Moline, Rock Island, and Elgin Traction Co. to operate an interurban for 20 years.

Yes-4153. No-538. Majority for-3615 or about 8 to 1.
Total-4691.

2. Granting the Tri-City Railway Co. the right to construct and maintain a railroad for 20 years.

Yes-3836 No-431 Majority for-3405 or 9 to 1.
Total--4267.

Both measures were carried by overwhelming majorities of eight to one, and nine to one; while the total average vote (4479) shows that there was a much greater popular interest than in the referendum election on July 23, 1912 when the average total vote was only (1890). In the latter election the largest total vote (2121) was less than half as large as the smallest total vote in the November election. The average total vote in the November referendum (4479) was 76% of the total number of registered voters. The experience with the referendum in Moline

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1-Council Proceedings, Nov. 1912 p.270.

indicates thatthe people give only a moderate amount of attention to matters presented for their consideration, that the voters have confidence in the commissioners, and that the general attitude of the people toward the commissioners is one of cooperation and support. All propositions presented by the commission have been upheld by substantial majorities; and the initiative and referendum have not been used to force action on the part of an unwilling Council.

COMMISSION GOVERNMENT IN ROCK ISLAND, WAUKEGAN, AND JACKSONVILLE.

I - ROCK ISLAND

The commission form of government was adopted in Rock Island because it was believed that the change would remedy certain conditions which had given to that city an ill reputation throughout the State. Rock Island has for some time been infested with a floating population which is more or less lawless, and has frequently suffered by the introduction of disturbing elements from certain neighboring cities. The municipal administration during the years 1909 and 1910 was especially marked by graft and corruption; while the liquor and vice elements were altogether too powerful. The Mayor as head of the police department gave protection to the saloon and dive keepers, who in turn relying upon this grant of official immunity, defied the law in a very bold fashion. Such conditions led to a reform movement. In April 1910 a Law and Enforcement League had been organized for the purpose of creating a sentiment in favor of a more rigid observance of the local and State laws. Upon the failure of this organization to accomplish any definite results, the question was in August 1910 taken up at a Banquet of the Business Men's Association, where the Commission Form of Government was brought forward as a possible remedy, and the preliminary steps of a campaign were planned. Committees were sent to cities where the system was in operation, and an attempt was made to familiarize the voters with the new form, with the result that petitions were finally circulated calling for an election on the proposition of adopting the commission form of government. It is of interest to

note that these petitions were circulated by a committee of citizens representing the Rock Island Club, The Rock Island Business Association and other civic organizations. The petitions were signed by 1889 voters or about four times the required number. The signatures were personally solicited by some eighty citizens, a large majority of whom were men employed in the shops and on the railroad, thus indicating that the movement was not led by a few business men alone.[1] At the special election held January 3, 1911, the Commission Form was adopted by a vote of 1922 to 1055 or by an approximate majority of two to one.[2]

With the new form adopted a large number of persons sought places on the primary ballot, there being ten nominees for mayor and about sixty-four for Commissioners. The mayor under the aldermanic system became a candidate to succeed himself; while two of the other candidates for this position were men of rather exceptional ability, who sought nomination and election not for financial reasons but for the betterment of the city. These two latter candidates, however, were defeated in the primaries on February 8, 1911, and Mayor McCaskrin and Mr. H. M. Schriver, assistant states attorney, were successful

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1. I am indebted for the above information to Mr. H. E. Dooley, student at the University of Illinois.

2. Ibid.

in securing nominations. The following men received the highest numbers of votes for Mayor and Commissioners and thus qualified as candidates in the final election.[1]

Mayor:

Mr. H. M. Schriver (asst-states attorney)	1584
Mr. G. McCaskrin (Mayor)	1450

Commissioners:

Mr. M. T. Rudgren (City Clerk)	1494
Mr. Archie Hart (street car conductor)...	1050
Mr. R. R. Reynolds (attorney)	1023
Mr. R. J. Carlson (Socialist leader).....	901
Mr. C. J. Smith (Police Magistrate)	833
Mr. J. Bear (retired merchant)	779
Mr. Uhl	647
Mr. Oren Holt	

In the final election, Mr. Schriver (first in primaries for mayor) was elected mayor, while for the position as commissioner, there were elected Mr. R. R. Reynolds (third in primary), and Mr. M. T. Rudgren (first in primary), Mr. Archie Hart (second in primary) and Mr. J. Bear (sixth in primary).

While several of the Commissioners are above the average of the aldermen elected under the aldermanic form, the

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1. Information secured from Mr. H. E. Dooley, student University of Illinois.

officers are in general no better than those chosen at former elections.[1] One cannot say that Rock Island received either a new or exceptionally qualified class of officials at her first election under Commission Form. Mayor Schriver was at the time of his election assistant-states attorney and is very closely connected with local and national politics; Mr. M. T. Rudgren (Commissioner of Accounts and Finance) was city clerk and is probably the most efficient man on the commission; Mr. R. R. Reynolds (Streets and Public Improvements) was a practicing attorney; Mr. Archie Hart (Public Health and Safety) was a street car conductor, president of the Tri City Railway Union, and a leader in labor circles; while Mr. J. Bear is a retired merchant and rather advanced in years.[2] From the standpoint of previous business experience, executive ability, or technical training, only two of the commissioners are adequately or especially fitted for the positions they are now occupying.

Old ideals dominated largely in the selection of Commissioners at the first election. Two of the present Commissioners gained success on account of their personal popularity, and not because of any fitness for the office. "One of these knows absolutely nothing about the details of his department and is too old to learn, while the other has been more or less

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1. Communication from Mr. M. S. Heagy, Vice-Pres. of the Central Trust & Savings Bank, March 10, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. M. S. Heagy, Vice-Pres. Central Trust and Savings Bank, March 10, 1913. Also Mr. H. E. Dooley, student, University of Illinois.

of a disappointment." [1] The secretary of the Rock Island Business Men's Association writes the following: "As to the selection of the Commissioners it cannot be said it was much better than before. The Commissioners are all good men, but not in all cases adapted to their vocation." The pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church says, "The new mayor and commissioners have not given satisfaction, and therefore with many there is little enthusiasm for the commission form." [2] The general consensus of opinion among the leading citizens of Rock Island is that at the next election of city officials the voters will be more careful to select commissioners who are fitted for the office.

The commissioners have been open to the serious fault of permitting their activities to be controlled by politics - the very thing the commission form of government attempts to eliminate. [3] The experience in Rock Island therefore refutes the argument that politics is always eliminated by the adoption of the Commission Plan. The influences which were so powerful under the aldermanic form still prevails and have affected the work of the commission to a large degree. The commissioners are especially subject to outside influences, and do not work in harmony. The lack of harmony is as noticeable to-day as it

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1. Communication from Mr. M. S. Heagy.

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3. Communication from Mr. L. P. Simpson, Editor, The Rock Island Argus, December 1912.

was under the mayor and council system.[1] Much of the friction has been caused by one man, Commissioner Reynolds, who is politically opposed to the Mayor. Commissioner Reynolds almost invariably votes against every important measure which arises before the Council. He is a man of considerable natural ability, a good talker, and "is probably in the right part of the time, while on the other occasions it appears very much as if he were playing politics."[2] Such a condition is conducive to anything but the most efficient government. At the very beginning of the administration there was a division over the appointment of City Engineer. The person nominated by Commissioner Reynolds, as head of the Public Improvements Department, was rejected by the commissioners on two occasions, and after a deadlock of several weeks the appointee of the mayor was accepted. In this contest the commissioners decided three to two.[3] Commissioner Reynolds, who is ex-officio President of the Board of Local Improvements, often votes against the estimated cost and sepcifications of public improvements submitted by that body through the City Engineer. A general survey of the proceedings of the commission shows that the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance does most of the active legislative work, and together with the Mayor transacts the greater part

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1. Communication from Mr. M.S. Heagy, Vice-Pres., Central Trust and Savings Bank, March 10, 1913.

2. Ibid.

3. Report of Proceedings of the City Council, June 1911.

of the business carried on in the Council meetings. With a few exceptions the other commissioners do little but register their approval or disapproval of matters presented.

The unpopularity and relative lack of success of the commission form in Rock Island is not due to any particular indifference or negligence on the part of the commissioners. The fault lies rather in the fact that a majority of them are unfitted by previous business training and executive ability for positions which require such a large amount of administrative skill and technical experience. If freed from politics and outside influences, the present commissioners may in time develop into efficient public servants, but the process of training is rather disadvantageous to the city and its citizens. One correspondent writes that there is a tendency for the commission "to get away from the idea of politics" and to use more "business-like ideas in their administrative affairs." [1] Certain it is that the citizens of Rock Island will in the future look more carefully to the selection of their commissioners and scan their business ability more closely than were done at the first election.[2]

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1. Communication from Mr. Edward B. Kreis, Treasurer, Rock Island Business Men's Ass'n., December 1912.

2. Communication from Mr. M. S. Heagy, March 10, 1913.

MAINTENANCE OF ORDER AND ENFORCEMENT OF LAW UNDER COMMISSION FORM.

The maintenance of order and the enforcement of the penal and moral code are difficult problems in Rock Island as the city is inhabited by a large floating population, and by a considerable number of foreigners and other citizens who hold a rather loose attitude toward such matters. In a city with such a population as Rock Island has, it is difficult to enforce Sunday closing and general liquor regulations. Temporary raids and attempts at reform are made, and the general feeling is that there has been some little improvement in the regulation of saloons.[1] In this respect, "says Mr. Edward B. Kreis, Treasurer of the Rock Island Business Men's Associations,"The commission form of government is far above the aldermanic form, because the commission has jurisdiction over the entire city, and is not hampered by friendships existing between the saloon keeper and the aldermen of the ward." Mr. M. J. Heagy, Vice-President of the Central Trust and Savings Bank also writes, "The saloon regulation has been good." It does not appear, however, that dives and disreputable houses have been eliminated, or that there has been very much difference in the regulation

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1. Information secured from Superintendent of Schools, Pastors of the First Presbyterian Church, Rev. T. E. Knowland (Pastor First Methodist Episcopal Church); Mr. E.B.Kreis (Treasurer Rock Island Business Men's Association and Real Estate Dealer); Mr. M. J. Heagy (Banker).

of the vice of the city, "An attempt is made at regulation", says the Pastor of the Rock Island Presbyterian Church; but charges are made that such is only surface work and that there is graft among the police.' The difference to-day is that the front doors are kept shut, but the crime, gambling and vice are there just the same."

WEAKNESS OF PRESENT ADMINISTRATION: RIOT OF 1912.

The unpopularity of the administration and some of the weaknesses of the present administration, are shown in a review of the events connected with the Rock Island riots in the spring of 1912, which brought the city into bad repute throughout the country. "It would be difficult to trace to the beginning the difficulties which have brought about the present acute situation in Rock Island," states the Chicago Tribune on the day of the riot. "They were apparent, however, when Mayor Schriver assumed office."[1] Following the election of Mayor Schriver in 1911, John Looney, the editor of the Rock Island News, began an editorial campaign against the mayor, and his paper was a weekly tirade against the administration. Looney was aided in his efforts by Mr. Henry McCaskrin, a brother of the man whom Mr. Schriver defeated in the election for mayor. On March 23, 1912, "The News" appeared with a

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1. See Chicago Tribune, March 27, 1912.

scandalous statement regarding the alleged dishonorable conduct of Mayor Schriver in Peoria. The Mayor and the Chief of Police suppressed the circulation of the sheet, and the editor was so severely beaten by the Mayor that he was compelled to remain in the hospital for several weeks. A few days later, Mr. H. McCaskrin, candidate for states attorney against a candidate supported by Mayor Schriver, gave an open air speech in which he suggested to the crowd that they had a right to regain possession of the suppressed publication. Excitement was already running high, a mob formed and started for the City Hall. It is not necessary to go into further detail regarding the riots, the calling out of troops by the Governor and the establishment of martial law in the city of Rock Island.[1] The disturbance was due in large part to the long standing political dissension between the Mayor and his political opponents, and in some degree to the fact that Mayor Schriver had been carrying on a campaign for a general moral cleaning up of the city. Such a policy naturally met with opposition, and the liquor and vice interests, together with the socialists and disgruntled politicians, were responsible for the riot and disorder which reigned in Rock Island for several days. The same classes also threatened the recall of Mayor Schriver, and at a mass-meeting, petitions were circulated for a recall election. In the recall petition, Mayor Schriver was charged with having gone beyond his rightful powers in suppressing "The News"; "that he had conducted himself in

1. See Chicago Tribune March 25-28, 1913.

disgraceful manner and that he was inefficient." Those who advocated the removal of Mayor Schriver were successful in securing a sufficient number of signatures and all indications were that the recall election would be held. Objections were entered, however, to the sufficiency of the petition, and it was thrown out in the County Court, on the grounds that some of the signatures were invalid. This is the nearest approach to an actual use of the recall provisions of the Illinois commission government law.

The blame for such a state of affairs cannot be placed upon the commission form of government, but was due to a complexity of causes - both social and political. It is true, however, that "the change of government gave rise to a spirit of opposition that was fostered by a lawless floating population which the commissioners had attempted to drive out and reform".[1]

It cannot be denied that in addition to the undercurrent of opposition which came from the socialists, the radical labor leader, and the saloon and dive keeper, an important cause of the disturbance was politics and local jealousies - especially the continual strife between the mayor and certain of his political opponents. The whole matter is of importance to us as indicating that politics and political influence of a rather sinister nature have continued under the commission form

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1. Communication from Mr. Edw. B. Kreis, March 7, 1913.

of government, and showing that the change of government in Rock Island has not in this respect resulted in much of an improvement. The commission form of government will not in all cases eliminate politics from the city government. It usually eliminates national and ward politics, but in some cases even national politics will exert some influence. The commission form of government merely lessens the power of politics in general by providing such checks and safeguards as publicity; the initiative, the referendum and recall; the short ballot; non-partizan primaries; an alphabetical arrangement of names on the ballot, etc., and makes possible under proper conditions the reduction of politics to a negligible quantity. The degree to which politics will be eliminated in any city under the commission form of government depends upon the extent to which upright and scrupulous men are elected to office. The election of such men depends upon the voters, and the commission form merely makes it easier for the voters to secure able men. The crux of the whole matter is, will the commission form of government enable the citizens to elect officials who are efficient, honest, and above stooping to political methods! In most cities the adoption of the commission form has resulted in the selection of a better type of men, and in nearly all, the power of politics has undoubtedly been decreased. The experience in Rock Island shows, however, that political influence of the same character as that usually connected with the aldermanic system may continue, altho

perhaps with lessened force, under the commission form.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

"The financial condition of the city is possibly a little better than it was under the aldermanic form, but not enough to boast about", is the opinion of the Vice-President of the Rock Island Business Men's Association. There have been some important financial improvements, the funds are better handled, and a large floating indebtedness has been paid off.[1] Rock Island has found it impossible to live within her income, and has resorted to an extensive use of anticipation warrants. Because of a lack of funds to meet current expenses, it was necessary during the first year under commission government to borrow $75,000.00 in tax warrants at 6% interest.[2] In 1909-10 Rock Island issued $65,000.00 in anticipation warrants at a similar rate of interest, thus showing that there has been no advance in this respect under commission form.[3] One should remember, however, that the treasury was depleted at the time the commissioners came into office, and that a large floating indebtedness was inherited from the previous administration.

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1. Communication from Mr. E. B. Kreis, March 14, 1913.

2. Proceedings of the City Council of Rock Island, July 1911, p. 12; August 1911, p.10, November 1911, p.15-16; January 1912, p.17.

3. See L. D. Upson,"Sources of Municipal Revenue in Ill." p.100.

During the first year under commission government many appropriations were over-spent, indicating either a lack of systematic budget making or extravagance on the part of the commissioners. For instance, in December 1911, almost three months before the close of the fiscal year, $8000.00 of the receipts of the water works department was transferred to the reservoir maintenance fund as the appropriations for that purpose had been entirely spent.[1] Again in March 1912, it was necessary to appropriate $1000.00 for the street department, due to the fact that the original appropriation of $10,000.00 had already been overspent.[2]

One popular criticism raised against the commission form of government in Rock Island is that it is expensive in itself. The appropriations for salaries in 1910-11 (the last year under the aldermanic form) was $10,500 as compared with $17,500 in 1911-12, or an increased expense in salaries alone amounting to $7000.00.[3] Desirous of making the commission form a success, the commissioners in September 1911 resolved that because of the increased expense of government each commissioner should do more active work, and thus effect a saving. Consequently it was determined that the commissioner of Accounts and Finance should assume the duties of City Clerk; that the office

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1. Proceedings of City Council, Dec. 1911, p.19.
2. Ibid, March 1912, p.21.
3. Proceedings of the City Council of Rock Island, September 1911, p.26-27.

of Superintendent of Water Works should be abolished and given to the Commissioner of Public Property.[1] Thus we find a policy adopted in Rock Island upon the initiative of the Commissioners themselves which might be made optional in cities of moderate size by the State Law. The possibility of assigning functions which are more or less technical in their nature to the direct control of the commissioners depends, however, upon the extent to which the commissioners are adequately prepared to perform such functions. There is no doubt that the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance is well fitted to assume the duties of the city clerk, but the Commissioner of Public Property is a retired merchant with very little expert knowledge as to the management of a water works system. Hence it was later found necessary to provide for a superintendent of the city water works and filtration plant.[2]

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

Prior to the adoption of the commision form of government the city of Rock Island had been rather negligent in the matter of public improvements. Under the commission form there has been an awakened activity in the way of public improvements, some twenty blocks of paving having been repaired and a large amount of new sidewalk ordered to be constructed.[3] During the present year there has been an increased amount of brick and asphalt paving, a total of approximately $95,000.00 having

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1. Proceedings of the City Council, September 1911, p. 26-27.
2. Ibid, November 1912.
3. Communication from Supt. of Schools; also Council Proceedings 1911-12.

been spent for that purpose. The sum of $16,738.00 has also been spent during the present year for the extension of water mains.[1] Such improvements as pavements and water main extensions depend upon the demand of the citizens and not upon any action of the city government itself. But the fact that there has been a demand for such improvements, together with the fact that it has been easier to secure improvement ordinances. indicates a slight advantage in favor of the present administration.

Bearing more directly upon the accomplishments of the commission form of government is the improvement of the water works department. The new filtration plant, which was completed under the previous administration, has been equipped with additional machinery, and the water works plant placed under supervision of a competent filtration expert with the result that a "greater supply of pure water is delivered to consumers." [2] The water mains have been extended about one mile and a half;[3] and two new boilers have been added to the pumping plant at a cost of approximately $2200.00.[4]

In the Summer of 1912 Rock Island, following the example of Elgin, Decatur, and Springfield, established a city market, and provided for a market master, who also has charge of

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1. Communication from Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, Reynolds.
2. Communication from Supt. of Schools; also personal interview with Waterworks Engineer Sharp, Rock Island, Ill.
3. Communication from Commissioner of Streets and Improvements R. R. Reynolds.

the inspection of weights and measures.[1] Another innovation recently adopted is the setting aside of a certain day each month month as "bill-day", when the mayor and commissioners meet at the city offices to receive and pass upon all bills presented against the city.[2]

FRANCHISES AND REFERENDA

One of the first important matters to come before the Commissioners was the granting of a franchise to the Central Union Telephone Company, which would permit that Company to purchase the rights of the Union Telegraph and Telephone Company. On June 29, 1911, an ordinance permitting such a consolidation was presented to the Council, and later adopted by a vote of four to one.[3] On August 21, 1911, a petition was presented by the voters protesting against the action of the council, together with another petition asking the council to adopt an ordinance granting a fifty year franchise to the Tri City Home Telephone Company.[4] The commissioners refused to take any action themselves on the latter proposition, but in compliance with the law decided to submit to the voters the two franchise ordinances and a third ordinance providing for an increase in

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1. Ibid, November 1911, p. 19.
2. Ibid, September 1911, p. 21.
3. Proceedings of the City Council of Rock Island, July 1911, p. 12
4. Ibid, August, 1911, p. 23.

the saloon license fee from $500 to $1000.[1]

The result of the referendum on October 31, 1911 was an overwhelming defeat for all three of the measures presented:-[2]

(1) Ordinance supplementary to franchise ordinance of Telephone Company.

Yes.	No.	Total.	Majority against.
895	2562	3457	1667 or approximately three to one

(2) Ordinance granting franchise to Tri City Home Telephone Company.

Yes.	No.	Total.	Majority against.
798	2604	3402	1906 or approximately three to one

(3) Increase of license fee to $1000.00.

Yes.	No.	Total.	Majority against.
1473	2090	3563	1473 or approximately two to one

In December 1911 a petition was filed, signed by 1000 legal voters, asking that the commissioners pass an attached ordinance allowing the Central Union Telephone Company to purchase the rights and equipment of the Union Electric Company.[3] The Council refused to pass the same, but resolved to submit an

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1. Ibid, September, 1911, p.27-28.
2. Ibid, November, 1911, p. 10.
3. Proceedings of the City Council of Rock Island, December 1911, p. 24.

ordinance permitting the consolidation of the two companies in connection with the general election to be held on April 2, 1912.[1]

In September 1912, a petition signed by 1500 voters was presented to the Council asking that the commissioners pass within thirty days, and without alteration, an attached ordinance giving a franchise to the Tri City Home Telephone Company, or call a special election.[2] The ordinance was presented to a referendum vote on December 10, 1912 and the following results were obtained:-[3]

Total vote for the franchise ... 1585
Total vote against the franchise 475
Total vote 2060

The question might well be asked at this juncture, what has Rock Island gained from her change of government? From the above discussion the impression may be made that very little advantage has accrued to the city by the adoption of the commission form, or that commission form of government has been a failure. A careful weighing of all evidence - both favorable and unfavorable - shows, however, that such a conclusion is erroneous. The men selected as commissioners have not given entire satisfaction, and as a whole have not proven to be much of an improvement over the old type of alderman; there has been a

1. Proceedings of the City Council, January 1912, p. 27.
2. Ibid, September 1912, p. 27.
3. Ibid, December 1912, p. 26.

decided lack of harmony in the commission itself; and local politics have influenced the action of the city officials. Neither have the commissioners been entirely successful in raising the general moral tone of the city. On the other hand, "the commissioners are apparently trying to do their best - the most of them at least." [1] Ward politics and jealousies have been eliminated, the saloons are somewhat better regulated, and the commissioners are not in any way controlled by liquor interests or public service corporations. The general consensus of opinion, also, is that the commission form is more business-like, more efficient, and more responsive to popular demands than the aldermanic system.[2] The treasurer of the Rock Island Business Men's Association makes the following comparison, "Under the aldermanic system there was no limit to the number of men that you would have to see before having a particular matter of business attended to. No one was particularly responsible, and if it was matter that the alderman did not care to be personally responsible for they kept turning you off from one to the other until the need for attention was gone, or you became disgusted and quit trying to get what you were after. Personally I have found the commission form to be much ahead of the aldermanic system in business-like and efficient care of public affairs.

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1. Communication from Superintendent of Schools, Rock Island, Illinois.

2. Communication from Mr. M. S. Heagy, Vice-Pres. Rock Island Business Men's Club and Mr. Edward B. Kreis, Treasurer of the Rock Island Business Men's Club.

All matters are brought before a certain department, and you have only one man to deal with. It may be that he is slow and in some cases, as in this city, short of money, but by persistent effort and with one man you can get your grievance taken care of."[1] The financial condition of the city has been improved, the commissioners are gradually getting away from politics, and are applying more business-like principles to the administration of the municipality. Twice as many public improvements have been installed as during the previous administration, the waterworks system has been improved and a greater supply of pure water furnished to consumers. Altho the commission form is not altogether popular in Rock Island, representative business and professional men do not regard it as a failure. As one correspondent writes, "While the change has not been what it should be, the blame is not entirely to be placed on the shoulders of the commissioners."[2] Local conditions are such that it has been uphill work for the commission. In fact there is some doubt in the writer's mind whether the most efficient commission could produce very great results in Rock Island. There is a strong political opposition to the administration, the city is heavily in debt, and the revenues are not sufficient to do even a small proportion of the things that are necessary.

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1. Communication from Mr. Eduard B. Kreis, March 7, 1913.

2. Communication from Mr. Eduard B. Kreis, March 7, 1913, Mr. H. P. Simpson, Editor of the Rock Island writes likewise, "The system is not popular at the present, but can hardly be considered a failure."

II. WAUKEGAN.

Waukegan, a city of 16,069 is located on the shores of Lake Michigan about thirty-five miles north of Chicago. Commission government was adopted in Waukegan by a vote of 929 to 883, or by a majority of only 46. The inattention of past administrations and the general looseness of the city government led to the adoption of the commission form of government in this city.[1]

In the primaries on March 14, 1911, there were 65 candidates for commissioners and six for mayor. The final election, held April 18, 1911, was very spirited and resulted in the election of the following men: Mayor, J. F. Bidinger; Commissioners; C. W. Diver; J. J. Dietmeyer; Carl Atterberry and E. V.Orvis.[2] A total vote of 2725 was cast for mayor which is ninety percent of the total number of registered voters. The fact that

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1. Commission Form was adopted on Feb. 14, 1911. The total vote cast (1912) was sixty percent of the total number of registered voters.

2. Mayor:

J. F. Bidinger	1854	Majority - about two to one.
D. L. Jones	871	
Total	2725	

Commissioners:

Carl Atterberry	1710	Peter McDermott	1198
J. J. Dietmeyer	1770	E. V. Orvis	1359
C. W. Diver	1258	Chas. Russell	1078
W. M. Holan	997	Wm. D. Whyt	1094

the first three names on the ballot for commissioners received the highest number of votes seems to indicate that the people voted in a mechanical way without the exercise of much judgment.

It cannot be said that the men elected were the best that could be secured, or that they are qualified to govern a city the size of Waukegan. The people had become more or less dissatisfied with the existing government, and felt that any change in administration would be an advantage.[1] Then too, the voters were somewhat over enthusiastic in believing that the commission form was an ideal system which in itself would give good government.[2] These facts probably account for the small amount of attention that was given to the qualifications of the various candidates.

The Mayor J. F. Bidinger is thirty-five years old, had been an alderman for about two years, and at the present time is County salesman for the Sprague-Warner Wholesale Co. of Chicago. Mr. Clarence W. Diver (Accounts and Finance) is a lawyer, thirty-three years of age, and has never been in politics before. Although his only business experience has been the conducting of a small law practice, Commissioner Diver seems to be giving greater satisfaction than any other man on the Commission.

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1. Mr. W. J. Allen, Supt. of Waterworks.

2. Council Proceedings, May 1912. Annual Report of Mayor p. 25-29.

Commissioner J. J. Dietmeyer (Streets and Public Improvements) is thirty years old and the son of a wealthy saloon-keeper. Mr. Dietmeyer has never been in business on his own responsibility, and in fact has never found it necessary to earn a living for himself. His business ability did not appeal to the people because he had none to refer to, and his election was due to the fact that he was "a good fellow, known and admired personally by a large number of voters."[1] Commissioner C. C. Atterberry (Public Health and Safety) is thirty-five years of age and was a drug clerk at the time of his election. Prior to his election Mr. Atterberry had not been in business for himself; and had never taken active part in politics. Since becoming Commissioner, however, Mr. Atterberry has purchased a drug store, which action aroused not a little opposition and discussion. Commissioner Atterberry's position as drug clerk made him acquainted with a large number of foreigners, and this fact, together with the coincidence that his name stood first on the ballot, secured his election. Commissioner Orvis(Public Property) is a lawyer, thirty seven years old, and the oldest man on the Commission. He has never held public office or displayed any special executive ability in his private affairs, and was elected "on account of his many friends, rather than because of his business experience.[2]

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1. Communication from Mr. W. J. Smith, Editor Waukegan Sun.
2. Ibid.

Thus we find that Waukegan in her first election under the commission form did secure a new class of city officials, but of a type which is rather unsatisfactory, and on the whole incompetent to administer the affairs of a city. Very little attention was paid to the qualifications of the various candidates, and those men who could attract the most votes because of their personal popularity were elected, regardless of their fitness to manage the affairs of any specific department. "Consequently", writes the editor of the Waukegan Sun, "a crowd of exceptionally young men, none experienced in particular lines were elected, with the result that they are today trying their best to learn how to successfully work out the new plan of government. Older and decidedly more qualified men for certain branches were defeated by large majorities, and had they been elected I believe the story here would be different." [1]

When the commission form first went into operation in Waukegan it was supposed that the commissioners would give the greater part of their time to the city's business, as the Mayors' salary was fixed at $2000.00 and that of each commissioner at $1700.00 per annum. None of the commissioners, with the exception of Mr. Dietmeyer, devote the proper amount of time to their official duties, and he does so because he has no other regular

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1. Illinois State Register (Oct. 6, 1912). Also communications from Rev. Geo. M. McGinnis, Mr. C. H. King, and Mr.W.C.Upton.

employment. Commissioner of Public Health and Safety Atterberry remains in his drug store most of the time, and although always in attendance at the Council Meetings, seldom appears at the headquarters of the police and fire departments. Most of the work of the police department is done by the Assistant-Chief, who occasionally consults with the Commissioner over the telephone. Commissioner Orvis pays as much attention as ever to his law practice and does not visit the water plant, of which he is superintendent, more than once a month. As one of the subordinates in the Department of Public Property says, "The trouble with Commissioner Orvis is that you never know where to find him when you want his advice or instructions."[1] Commissioner Diver (Accounts and Finance) spends a short period each day in the city offices, but most of the work which it was supposed would be done by the commissioner himself is performed by the City Clerk. In fact the people feel that today two men are receiving salaries for work which under the aldermanic system was accomplished by one person.[2]

It was the general belief prior to the election that under the commission form the city officials would be in their offices most of the time prepared to take up matters of public business, hear complaints, and receive suggestions. The citizens

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1. Mr. W. J. Allen, Supt. of Waterworks.

2. Communication from Mr. W. J. Smith, Editor Waukegan Sun.

also expected that each commissioner would assume personal charge of his department, and thus insure its being conducted on a business-like basis. The experience, however, has been that a majority of the commissioners give very little more time to the administration of the affairs of the municipality than did the best class of alderman under the former system of government. The people of Waukegan made the serious mistake of expecting that the commission form of government would of itself bring about perfect government and remove all previously existing evils. Commission government to be a success makes it necessary that the people possess sufficient political consience and civic interest to secure the election of good men, and once the men are in office to demand that they serve the public interests. Robert S. Childs says, "the short ballot is the magic in the commission law." [1] Waukegan has a short ballot which eliminates political designations, concentrates the efforts of the voters upon a few men, and makes the election more simple. The above discussion will show that these devices did not secure a superior or able class of officials in that city.

Ward and national politics appear to have been eliminated in Waukegan, but local and personal politics, surviving from former years, exert a noticeable influence over the city government.[2]

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1. Robert S. Childs: Annals of the American Academy of Pol. and Soc. Sciences, November 1911, p. 822.

2. Communications from Mr. S. D. Talcot; Mr. C. H. King, Mr. W. J. Smith (Editor of Waukegan Sun)

The commissioners are at present opposed by the same elements which contended against them in the election, and the general administration has met with opposition from those classes which have usually fought the city government. The opportunity for favoritism in filling municipal positions has been lessened by the adoption of the civil service law for cities; but the commissioners have shown an inclination to interfere with the absolute authority which should be given to the civil service commission, and have in various ways violated its rules and the principles for which it stands.[1]

In spite of the inefficiency and inattention of some of the commissioners, the general belief is that the qualifications of the Commissioners are above those of the average alderman, and that the errors committed have resulted from lack of experience, judgment, and executive ability. Prior to the adoption of the commission form, Waukegan has always been more or less under the control of the liquor forces. "For the first time in our history, we are not governed by saloon keepers," writes Mr. C. H. King, "there has been no graft, and the commissioners are honest." The fact that the commissioners do not work in

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1. Communication from Mr. W. J. Smith (Editor of Waukegan Sun).

harmony has probably given rise to the strongest criticism. As in Springfield, there appears to be almost continual strife in the several departments, and there is a tendency for each commissioner to work independently of the other heads. One correspondent writes that "The members of the commission do not pull together as they were inclined to do under the aldermanic form." [1] The present administration is also opposed by: (1) the "wheel-horse" politicians who object for political reasons, and whose demands for patronage have been ignored; and (2) by those who desire a more strict regulation of saloons, Sunday closing, etc.[2] As Rev. Geo. McGinnis writes, "Dissatisfaction is due to the fact that laws regulating the saloons are not enforced."[3] It is said that the commissioner of Public Health and Safety, who conducts a drug store, sells liquor on Sunday. The "wets" claim that this commissioner owes his election to them and he is therefore more or less under their control. Commissioner Clarence Diver writes on April 3, 1913, "With reference to the general moral tone of the city under the commission form of government, I believe it can be truthfully said that it has

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1. Communication from Mr. W. C. Upton (Attorney), April 10, 1913.

2. Communications from Mr. C. H. King, Mr. W. C. Upton, Mr. L. P. Hana; and Commissioner Clarence Diver, Rev. Geo. McGinnis.

3. Communication from Rev. Geo. McGinnis, March 31, 1913.

improved, but there is yet a great deal of need for further improvement."[1]

Among those business and professional men who have been able to look beyond the defects of administration which have resulted from the frailties of human nature, there is a common notion that the expense of administration has been less; that there have been more public improvements; that more business-like methods have been adopted, and that there has been a step in the direction of a business directorate; that there has been no passing of complaints from one department to another as under the old form; that the influence of politics has been somewhat lessened; and that the better class of citizens has been interested as never before in municipal affairs.[2]

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

For many years Waukegan has been bonded to the limit allowed by law, and remains in the same condition today, altho the bonded indebtedness has been slightly decreased. The bonded debt when the commissioners took charge was $139,600.00 (Exclusive of special assessment bonds)[3]; while at the present date it amounts to $120,000.00 or a decrease of $19,000.00 during the past two years.[4] The sinking fund for paying off the city bonds

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1. Communication from Rev. Geo. McGinnis, April 3, 1913.
2. Communications from L. P. Hannah; Rev. Geo. McGinnis, Mr. C. H. King, Mr. C. H. King; Mr. W. C. Upton, Mr. S. D. Talcott, and Commissioner Clarence Diver.
3. Council Proceedings, Report of Autidor, p. 49. (4) see next.

is $7,634.34, which if deducted from the amount of outstanding bonds leaves a net bonded indebtedness of only $112,366.00. The treasury was depleted and the financial condition of the city was otherwise unpromising at the time the commissioners came into office. $14,044.09 of the dram shop revenues had been used by the aldermen in payment for the annual installment of public benefits. Also $31,186.29 of the tax levy to be collected in the Spring of 1912 had been consumed by 5% tax warrants drawn against the city by the former administrations. The floating and bonded debt had reached the constitutional limit, and not a dollar could be borrowed. The floating debt when the commission form went into effect amounted to $39,814.47.[1] By the end of the first fiscal year this had been reduced to $26,646.00; while at the close of the second fiscal year the floating debt had been increased to $40,000.00.[2] The commissioners have found it necessary as did the city government under the aldermanic form to issue tax warrants, which are expensive in that they draw 5% interest and use up the city's income before it comes into the treasury. On May 31, 1912, the amount of 5% warrants outstanding was $18,530.30; while on January 31, 1913, the amount

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4. (See previous page) Council Proceedings, February 1913, Report of City Clerk, p.9.

1. Council Proceedings May 1911, Report of Commissioner of Accounts, p. 45-46; May 1912 Report of Commissioner of Accounts, p.34-35.

2. Communication from Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, May 1, 1913.

had increased to $30,399.05.[1] Thus we see that there has been no improvement in this respect, and that the commission has not found it possible to keep the city within its revenue. Just how much this situation is due to conditions inherited by the commissioners from previous administrations, and how much to the officials themselves it is impossible to say, but the fact that there has been a lack of any special improvement does not speak favorably for the present administration.

During the first year under commission form there was an increase in revenue from almost every source, with a few exceptions. A comparison of the various income accounts for the fiscal years of 1911 and 1912 shows an increase in dog licenses during 1912 to the amount of $654.00; an increase in wholesale liquor licenses of $954.16; and increased water rents of $8,607.53.[2] In 1912 we find interest on city deposits, police court fines, and the care of cemetery lots producing revenues of $4,159.07; $1,487.25; and $1,336.00 respectively, while during the previous year there was no revenue from these items.[3] Only in the income from saloon licenses do we find a decrease, in the amount of $2,258.93. From the thirty-five important sources of miscellaneous revenue, $60,674.53 was received in 1911 as compared with $77,765.50 from the same sources in 1912 or an increased miscellaneous revenue of $17,040.97.[4] Every available source

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1. Council Proceedings, January 1913, p.8.
2. Council Proceedings, May 1911, and May 1912. City Clerk's and City Treasurer's Annual Reports.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

of revenue is being resorted to by the commissioners and at present it is planned to levy a wheel tax upon automobiles, motorcycles, expressmen, etc. Such action, altho it is meeting with not a little criticism, is perhaps necessary because of the heavy indebtedness inherited from previous administrations; and the commissioners should at least be given credit for enforcing the collection of all moneys due the city. The general feeling is however, that the present government is much more expensive and that this has necessitated an increased extension of the field of special taxes and business licenses. The city bond tax has also been increased from 57 cents per $100.00 valuation in 1911 to 72 cents in 1912, and the city tax from $1.20 to $1.23 or a total increase of 18 cents per $100.00 valuation.[1]

POLICE, FIRE, AND HEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

The Department of Public Health and Safety was in serious need of reorganization when the commissioners took charge. During the first year, ordinances were passed for the inspection of plumbing, and for preventing the contamination of food products which are placed on display. The alleys of the city have been cleaned up, and an arrangement made with the authorities of North Chicago whereby the sewage and offal from that city has been

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1. See Council Proceedings May 1911 and May 1912.

diverted from the Waukegan river. The expense of the health department for 1912 was $445.47 as against $553.83 during the preceding year.[1] There has been no definite health program, however, and the small amount of money appropriated for the purposes of health protection has made any extensive work impossible.

"The present state of the Fire Department with reference to efficiency and discipline is to be highly commended," says the commissioner of Public Health and Safety in his annual report for 1912. The expense of operating the department for the fiscal year 1911-12 was $12,694.08, or $1,913.52 more than was incurred for the operation of single station during the preceding year.[2] An additional station has been provided, costing approximately $22,000.00.[3] A new auto-combination wagon was also purchased for the fire department during 1912. The general efficiency of the fire department is indicated by the fact that the value of the property endangered by fire in 1911-12 amounted to $776,330.00, while the approximate loss was only $66,225.00.[4]

In the police department the payroll has been relieved of the salary paid the chief of police by an ordinance which makes the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety ex-officio Chief of Police.[5] One is led to doubt whether any advantage

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1. Council Proceedings May 1912, Annual Report of Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, p. 42-43.
2. Ibid, p.43.
3. Ibid, June 1912.
4. Ibid, Annual Report of Fire Department, 1911-12. p. 44-45.

has been gained by such action so far as the administration is concerned, when one takes into consideration the little personal attention that is given by the Commissioner. Altho a general increase in the wages of the patrolmen was made in 1911-12, the operating expenses for that year showed a decrease of $3,513.86 over those of 1911. We also find that $1,487.25 in fines was turned over to the city treasurer during 1911-12, while in 1910-1911 there was no revenue from police courts. In fact from May 1, 1906 to May 1, 1911, the total amount of fines paid into the city treasury was only $102.00.[1]

IMPROVEMENTS IN WATERWORKS DEPARTMENT.

The most remarkable improvement under commission form has been that in the waterworks department. The advance made in this division of the municipal service has been in large measure due to the activities of a proficient engineer and bacteriologist. On May 1, 1911, the water department was $13,000 in debt; about $2000.00 had been borrowed from the harbor fund to pay salaries, and the amount of $11.5000.00 with interest was due on a pump which had been purchased two years before. One year later there was a balance on hand, with all but a few monthly bills paid.

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1912, Annual Report of Fire Department, 1911-12, p. 43.

The water collections were also $8,607.53 greater than in 1910-1911, and $7000.00 was put into permanent improvements during the year.[1] In 1910-11, there was a deficit of $4000.00 in expenses over earnings, while in 1911-12 the net income was $14,000.00.[2] The greatest improvement in the waterworks department has been the establishment of a "hypo-plant" for the purification of the water supply. The City of Waukegan obtains its water supply from Lake Michigan and empties all its sewage into the lake without treatment. As a result the water has been very impure and the prevalence of typhoid amazing. In March 1912, there were eighty-two cases of typhoid fever, while the average for the past few years has been about 600 per year. In fact Waukegan has been known to have one of the highest deathrates in the United States for a city of its size. With the installation of the "hypo-plant" the Commissioner of Public Property reports, that "ninety percent of the typhoid which has been raging in the past has been done away with." [3]

During the first year under commission form, the net earnings of the cemetery department were $875.00, whereas in 1910-11 there was a deficit of about $2000.00. [4]

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1912, Annual Report of Commissioner of Public Property, 1911-12, p.52-53. (The water rates have not been raised, but lowered)
2. Communication from Commissioner of Public Property, April 23, 1913.
3. Council Proceedings, May 1912, Annual Report of Commissioner of Public Property, 1911-12; also Communication from Commissioner of Public Property.
4. Communication from Commissioner of Public Property, Apr.23,1913

During 1911-12 the commissioners made a long-term contract with the electric lighting company, by the terms of which the city receives seventy additional lights at an expense which is no greater than that incurred for the less modern system.[1] At present the rates and service of the gas company are under consideration, but the commissioners are hesitant to proceed until a thorough investigation has been made which will furnish them with data sufficient to support their demands. As the gas franchise does not expire until 1947, and since the maximum rate is fixed by ordinance at an excessive figure, it seems as tho the commissioners can do little beyond demanding an improvement in service.[2]

The preceding review of the activities of the commissioners during the past two years shows that in spite of the general unpopularity and the lack of executive ability of the officials, many improvements have been made. A slight advance has been made in the financial condition of the city, the revenues have been increased, the waterworks system has been improved, and the police and fire departments reorganized. The people of Waukegan expected too much from the commission form when they anticipated that a great reduction would be made in the expense of government, that taxes would be lowered, and that a complete transformation would be made in the moral tone of the municipality.

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1912, p. 54-55.

2. Ibid, January 1912, p. 18-19. The referendum has not been used in Waukegan.

As said before, they expected that the commission form of government would in itself produce these results, and overlooked the fact that their attainment would be possible only through the election of the proper sort of men. But the man selected - even though somewhat inexperienced and lacking in judgment and public spirit - have accomplished much more than was accomplished under the aldermanic system, the government has been honest, more responsible and more business-like.

III. JACKSONVILLE.

Jacksonville, a city with a population of 15,386, is a residence and educational center, there being located within its boundaries two of the oldest collegiate institutions in the West - Illinois College and Illinois Womans College. The State School for the Deaf, the State School for the Blind, and the Central Hospital for the Insane are also found in Jacksonville. Among the leading industries are a large woolen factory, the plant of the Illinois Steel Bridge Company, and several meat packing establishments.

Under the ward system Jacksonville found it impossible to secure municipal officials of any particular executive ability, because the majority party in each ward was usually controlled by a single politician or a small group of politicians. Naturally such a system developed into a bi-partisan combination, which controlled the city government, and generally ignored any movement looking toward the betterment of the whole city. The aldermen and mayor gave very little attention to city affairs, and the government was managed upon a basis which was anything but business-like. The most common-place matters were often delayed while those which received immediate consideration were disposed of in a more or less careless manner. Politics and political methods of a rather corrupt type prevailed, and "generally speaking the business of the city was directed into a channel which would produce votes in the future". In making appointments to the municipal service, very little attention was paid to merit, and a complete

change of subordinate officials was usually made at the beginning of each administration.[1]

In 1910-11 the city of Jacksonville had a bonded debt equal almost to the limit allowed by law, in addition to a floating debt of $60,000.[2] In fact, liabilities were increased as long as anyone would credit the city, and many of the city employees had not received their salaries for months. The burden of such a state of affairs fell in the last analysis upon the shoulders of the business men and the tax payers. In the winter of 1910-11 the directors of the Jacksonville Business Mens Association called a special meeting in coöperation with a number of interested citizens, and this joint body appointed a committee with the president of the Association as chairman, to carry on a campaign for the adoption of the commission form. This Committee gathered data from other cities, presented the voters with a statement of the financial condition of the city, and described the unsatisfactory methods then employed by those who directed the city government.[3] The result of this campaign was the adoption of the commission form on January 31, 1911 by a vote of 1471 to 837,or by a majority of 634. The total vote(2308) was 63% of the total number of registered voters.

In the general municipal election the following men were declared elected:

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1. Communication from Mr. P. B. Fritchey, Secy. of Jacksonville Business Mens Assn. Jan. 3, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. C. R. Knollenberg, Comm. of Accts. and Finance, Feb. 1, 1913.
3. Communication from Mr. P. B. Fritchey, Secy. of Jacksonville Business Mens Assn. Jan. 3, 1913.

Mayor: -- Geo. W. Davis

Commissioners: --

C. R. Knollenberg. (Accts. and Finance)

Louis H. Engel. (Public Health and Safety)

Wm. Newman (Streets and Public Improvements)

Chas. W. Brown (Public Property)

Judged from the standpoint of previous business experience and executive ability, the citizens of Jacksonville elected commissioners who are not in all cases fitted for the positions they now occupy. They cannot qualify as municipal experts, or as men who would hold business positions requiring executive ability. As a correspondent writes, "Only one or two of the commissioners are really qualified; the others are politicians. With one or two exceptions they are of the same type as were the men elected under the aldermanic system."[1] As another citizen writes, "There has been no special improvement in the quality of officers, the general qualifications are only fair."[2]

The Mayor, Geo. W. Davis, was a newspaper reporter of mediocre caliber,who had given the public rather efficient service as city clerk. Commissioner C. R. Knollenberg (Accounts and Finance) was a cigar dealer and manufacturer. He inherited this business from his father, and did little more than keep up

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1. Communication from Mr. H. Capps (Clothing Manufacturer), April 10, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. J. J. Reeve (Postmaster), April 1, 1913.

the establishment. Commissioner Wm. H. Newman (Streets and Public Improvements) has been almost a failure in business. He first entered business as proprietor of a shirt and underwear factory. Not meeting with success in this venture, he took up the wholesale notion business, and retired some years later with practically nothing. Commissioner Louis H. Engel (Commissioner of Public Health and Safety) was head bookkeeper for the Illinois Bridge Company, and later conducted a cigar and billiard room. Mr. Engel received his greatest support from the Irish element. Commissioner Chas. W. Brown (Public Property) was a civil engineer and well equipped for his position, as he probably knew more about the waterworks than any man in the city. Commissioner Brown was killed by a political fanatic in the Spring of 1912, and his place was filled by the appointment of Mr. J. F. Brennan, Commissioner Brennan was a tinsmith by occupation, and also conducted a sporting-goods shop. He is regarded as a level headed business man.[1]

Thus we see that a majority of the Jacksonville commissioners are really inefficient to manage the affairs of the city, that they do not come from a new type of officeholders, and that judged from the standpoint of previous business experience and general ability, they are perhaps receiving higher salaries than if employed in a private corporation.[2] One has made a failure in business; another was a reporter, who had probably

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1. Information secured from Mr. E. Saye (Real Estate and Insurance)
2. Mr. E. Saye; also communication from Mr. Bernard Gause, Vice-Pres. Jacksonville Business Mens Assn.

never earned more than $15 or $20 per week; the third a bookkeeper: the fourth a cigar manufacturer, and a man with a part record for rather dissolute habits; while the fifth conducted a small mercantile business. A careful analysis of the personnel of the commission will present an explanation for the fact that commission government "has not met the expectations of some citizens."[1]

The main issue in the selection of commissioners was that of the "wets" against the "drys". In the primary the "drys" spread their votes over a field of about forty candidates, while the "wets" concentrated their efforts on about ten. The result was the nomination of five "wet" and three "dry" candidates for commissioners. A bank fund, it is said, defeated the "dry" candidate for Mayor, and the "wets" were successful in securing the election of three of their number. Later one of the anti-liquor commissioners was shot, and the majority filled the vacancy by appointing a"wet" man.[2] At present, therefore, there are one "dry" and four "wet" commissioners, altho the city is anti-saloon territory. It should be noted, however, that local option was adopted in the township because of the large rural vote, and that probably a majority of the citizens of Jacksonville would prefer to have saloons. As the city had saloons during the greater part of the previous administration, it is difficult to compare liquor regulations under the two forms of government.

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1. Communication from Mr. H. M. Capps (Clothing Manufacturer) April 10, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. Post (Pastor Congregational Church) March 31, 1913.

There is some difference of opinion among the citizens of Jacksonville as to the strictness with which local option is enforced. One correspondent writes that the commissioners have stood consistently for an enforcement of the provisions of the local option law;[1] another says, liquor regulation has been equally as good as it was under the mayor and aldermen.[2] Other citizens say that "boot-legging" is common, and that there has been very little change.[3] The commissioners have, however, adopted a very stringent liquor ordinance, which was referred to the voters and upheld by a majority of two to one.[4] The most general view seems to be that the State laws have been moderately well enforced, but some criticism is offered that the provisions of the recently adopted liquor ordinance have not been impartially administered, and that friends of the city officers have privileges which are not granted to others.

There has been only a slight change in the general moral tone of the city. A certain lawless element has been driven out, but this has been due to local option rather than to any action of the commissioners. Crimes are committed and laws disregarded as commonly as ever, altho a greater effort is made to arrest the violators. Increased activity in this respect should be attributed, however, to the sheriff and states attorney. There

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1. Communication from Mr. Bernard Cause (Vice-Pres. Business Mens Association) March 31, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. H. M. Capps (Clothing Manufacturer) April 10, 1913.
3. Mr. Edward Saye (Real Estate and Insurance)
4. See page

has been little change in the organization and efficiency of the police department, as the police force is maintained and disciplined on "the small town plan".[1]

Ward politics has been abolished and national politics almost eliminated from the city government since the adoption of the commission form. The action of the commissioners is, however, guided to a large extent by local and personal politics. One member of the commission it is said would play politics if he could, but his colleagues have made this impossible. Altho a majority of the appointments have been made irrespective of Democratic and Republican affiliations, personal politics has in many cases determined the personnel of the subordinate municipal service.[2]

The general consensus of opinion among professional and business men in Jacksonville is that commission form of government has been more business-like and more responsible. The Secretary of the Jacksonville Business Mens Association makes the following comparison: "The aldermanic system was anything but business-like. The aldermen gave the city's affairs only such time as they felt disposed to, after they were thru with their daily labors. The result was that even the most ordinary things arising before the council were frequently long delayed, and even those things which were promptly disposed of, did not as a general rule receive the careful consideration which

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1. Mr. Edward Saye and Mr. D. O. Clark (Illinois College).
2. Communications from Mr. Bernard Gause, Mr. Harry M. Capps, Rev. Post and Mr. Edw. Saye.

good government demands. ..... Today our commissioners devote their entire time to the business management of the city and if you have a matter of business to transact with our city government you can receive as prompt attention as would be given in any private business house."[1] The editor of the Jacksonville Courier states that the affairs of the municipality are conducted on a more business-like basis, and that the expenditures are more carefully made and supervised.[2] "The commission form is an improvement over the aldermanic system", writes Mr. Henry M. Capps (Clothing Manufacturer), "chiefly in that it concentrates responsibility, and the commissioners represent the whole city instead of ward cliques."[3] Mr. John J. Reeve (Postmaster), says, "Business is done in a more business-like manner, and each commissioner seems to feel a responsibility. The meetings are held as business meetings and not as grand stand plays."[4] "It has given us more business-like administration," writes Mr. F. E. Farrell and Mr. E. E. Crabtree (bankers).[5] Mr. Bernard Gause, who was at the head of the movement for the adoption of the commission form is of the opinion that the present form of government is an improvement for the reasons: first, that the commissioners are answerable to all the people and not to any one section; second, that the compensation is large enough to

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1. Communication from Mr. P. B. Fritchey, January 3, 1913.
2. Illinois State Register (Springfield) October 6, 1913.
3. Communication, April 10, 1913.
4. Communication, April 1, 1913.
5. Communication, April 1, 1913.

warrant the commissioners devoting as much time to the city's business as they would if employed by a private corporation. This has proved several things in Jacksonville" writes Mr. Cause, "and principally that you can always have any business you now wish to transact with the city transacted promptly".[1]

Responsibility, however, has not been completely fixed especially in the matter of public improvements. The supervision of pavement construction and the laying of sewers is in the hands of the Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, the Superintendent of Streets, the City Engineer, and the Street Inspector. Then too there is a Board of Local Improvements, which draws up the preliminary plans, specifications and estimates for all special assessment work. Between these two classes of officers it is difficult to enforce responsibility and bad paving has resulted in several instances. Some time ago a considerable amount of defective pavement was repaired, but when a sewer main broke it was discovered that the identical material had been relaid.[2]

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

The finances of Jacksonville were in very bad condition when the commissioners came into office.[3] In fact the city has for many years been burdened with a bonded debt, almost

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1. Mr. Bernard Gause, March 31, 1913.
2. Mr. D. O. Clark (Illinois College).
3. Communication from Mr. C. R. Knollenberg, Commissioner of Accounts and Finance.

equal to the limit allowed by law. The tax rate has been at the maximum for about thirty years, and since 1868, when $150,000 in bonds was issued to cover an administrative shortage, the financial situation has been a most perplexing one.[1] The bonded debt was decreased by $10,000 during the first year of commission government. The floating debt when the commissioners assumed control was $60,000; on February 1, 1913, or almost two years later, the floating indebtedness was $37,000, or a decrease of $23,000.[2]

Thus it is seen that there has been only a slight improvement in the financial condition of the city during the administration of the commissioners. According to an official statement of the commissioner of Accounts and Finance, the commissioners have made a saving of over $30,000.[3] A prominent banker writes that "the present commissioners have in less than two years gained about three fourths of a year, and if the same rate is continued will be out of debt when they retire from office."[4] The Pendleton Auditing Company has the following to say: "In my opinion the greatest benefit derived from commission form of government has been the collection of the revenue which the city has earned from the waterworks."[5] The waterworks revenue for the year 1911-12 shows an increase of $12,973.65 over

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1. Mr. Edward Saye.
2. Communication from Commissioner Knollenberg.
3. Communication from Mr. C. R. Knollenberg (Accounts and Finance) February 1, 1913.
4. Communication from Messrs. F. E. Farrell, and E. E. Crabtree (Bankers) April 1, 1913.
5. Council Proceedings, August, 1912. Auditors Report, p. 8-9.

that for 1910-11. The auditing company also reported that this same tendency was found in all departments of the city government at the close of the first year under commission form, thus showing that the officials were making a proper effort to collect all moneys.[1]

"The general method of keeping accounts has been much better than shown by your former audit," is the report of the Pendleton Auditing Company after a review of the city accounts for the first year under commission form.[2] One cannot say, however, that these semi-official statements of the improvements in the financial system are altogether unprejediced. A personal investigation soon convinces one that the accounting system employed is not only inadequate and out of date, but that it is almost impossible to secure intelligent data without a long and laborious search.[3] As one correspondent says, "Perhaps no man in town has any comprehensive idea of what the city's finances are."[4] A proper distinction is not made between the various departments of the city government, and it is impossible to determine the amounts chargeable to the waterworks department. The monthly financial statements are unsystematic, and do not present a clear picture of the fiscal transactions and the financial condition of the municipality. For instance, a typical monthly statement includes: (1) a report of the receipts in the city clerk's office classified as tax, license, and cemetery

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1. Council Proceedings, August, 1912. Auditors Report, p. 8-9.
2. Council Proceedings, August, 1912. Auditors Report, 1911-12. p.8
3. Mr. Edward Saye.
4. Ibid.

receipts; (2) a brief report of the Water Superintendent, which is merely an account of the moneys collected and turned over to the city clerk; (3) a report of the Justice of the Peace, and of the Chief of Police. The account of the monthly expenditures is presented only in terms of total disbursements, and no attempt is made to classify and subdivide expenses according to the purposes for which they are incurred. In addition to the above accounts, there is also a statement of the receipts and balances in the special assessment, the sinking, and the poll tax funds, and an account of the anticipation warrants outstanding. This latter series of facts is printed together, without any attempt to give a careful subdivision and classification, so that their intelligent use is almost impossible.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.

The commissioners have undertaken several tasks of more or less importance, especially the improvement of the water supply and the repair of the electric lighting plant. Formerly the lights were closed down at 11 o'clock, but under the commissioners the plant has been repaired and new equipment added, so that at present the lights are kept burning most of the night.[1] The commissioners are planning to enlarge and rebuild the lighting system, and have passed an ordinance providing for the issuing of $50,000 in lighting bonds which will be presented to the voters in the near future.[2]

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1. Mr. D. O. Clark. (Illinois College).
2. Council Proceedings, February 1913, p. 4.

Jacksonville has always had more or less difficulty in obtaining a supply of pure water. Water for domestic purposes is pumped from a creek near the city, while drinking water is secured from cisterns and surface wells. A few years ago a private company was given the right to furnish water from the Illinois River, but the system was not up to specifications, the supply proved inadequate, and the relations between the water company and the city became a matter of litigation in the courts.[1] The commissioners at first experimented with drive wells, but were unable to obtain a sufficient supply of underground water, whereupon several plans of improving the waterworks were advanced, including the issuance of $50,000 in water bonds.[2] Finally, in December 1912 the city officials came to an agreement with the Jacksonville Water Company whereby that company agrees to furnish the city with water pumped from the Illinois River some twenty miles away.[3] The contract with this company was ratified at a special election on February 4, 1913 by a vote of 904 to 198, or by an approximate majority of 4 to 1. It should be noted, however, that much of the credit for the above agreement should be attributed to the cooperation and aid of the Business Mens Association and other like interests, which were especially active in the movement leading to this improvement, and which gave to the commissioners the impetus necessary to bring about a final settlement of the matter.

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1. Mr. D. O. Clark (Illinois College).
2. Council Proceedings.
3. Council Proceedings, December 1912, p.4.

There is little noticeable difference in the condition of the streets, as the street cleaning force is very small; and only the business streets receive careful attention. The main residence streets are as dirty as ever, and it is reported that leaves and rubbish remain on the pavements from early fall until washed away by the spring rains.[1]

The police department, as described above, is organized on a "small-town basis", and the fire department is "notoriously inefficient", due to the lack of organization and the character of the men in charge. One instance will suffice to show the weakness of this most important division of the city government. At a recent fire the engine was found to be "dead" when it reached the scene of the conflagration, and the result was a property loss of from $12,000 to $15,000.[2]

REFERENDUM IN JACKSONVILLE.

The commissioners upon coming into office found that the street railway company was operating without a franchise, but almost a year elapsed before an ordinance was passed giving thw railway company the privilege of maintaining its lines within the city. The franchise ordinance as finally adopted by the commissioners was presented to a referendum vote in April 1912. Among other things this agreement provided for one man car service. The laboring classes opposed the adoption of such a proposition on the ground that it would involve a decrease

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1. Mr. D. O. Clark (Illinois College).
2. Mr. D. O. Clark and Mr. Ed. Saye. Also Council Proceedings, November 1912. p. 3.

in the number of railway employees, and the ordinance was defeated by a vote of 1265 to 387 or by a majority of approximately three to one.[1] The total vote (1625) was very small, being only 48% of the total number of registered voters. No attempt has been made to secure another franchise, and the street railway company is today conducting its business without any legal authority from the city.

On July 8, 1912 the commissioners adopted a stringent liquor ordinance and in August a petition was presented by a number of electors asking for the repeal of the same.[2] At first several of the commissioners favored rescinding their previous action, but it was later decided to submit the proposition to the voters for approval or disapproval. At a special election in September 1912, the liquor ordinance was adopted by a vote of 1092 to 625 or by a majority of approximately two to one. The total vote (1618) was only 48% of the total number of registered voters.[3]

On February 4, 1913 the referendum was employed to authorize a contract with the Jacksonville Water Company for supplying the city with water. This agreement was ratified by a vote of 904 to 198 or by a majority of four to one. The total vote, however, was very small being only 32% of the total number of registered voters. It is planned to use the referendum again to authorize the issuing of bonds for the improvement of the

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1. Mr. D. O. Clark (Illinois College); City Clerk, Feb. 24, 1913.
2. Council Proceedings, July 1912, p. 3; August 1912, p.2.
3. City Clerk, February 24, 1913.

municipal lighting plant.[1]

The results of the referendum in Jacksonville show that on the whole the citizens have taken very little interest in matters presented to a popular vote. In no instance has any proposition received a total vote equal to one-half of the number of qualified voters. Where such a small portion of the electors express their will on a matter of public policy, there is some doubt as to whether or not that expression indicates the opinion of the great majority. The experience with the referendum in Jacksonville also shows in a general way the lack of interest in municipal affairs in that city.

1. City Clerk, February 24, 1913.

Chapter VI.

COMMISSION GOVERNMENT IN OTTAWA, KEWANEE, PEKIN, CARBONDALE, SPRING VALLEY, AND BRACEVILLE.

I. Ottawa.

Ottawa, with a population of 9,535, is one of the Illinois cities under 10,000 which has commission form of government. Loose and unsatisfactory methods of city administration were the principal causes which led Ottawa to adopt the commission plan at a special election held January 17, 1911.[1] The citizens took an active interest in the campaign and the vote was rather large. "Most of the votes", says a correspondent, "were not by the people who had investigated and become acquainted with the merits of the system, but on the ground that any change would undoubtedly be for the better.[2]

Ottawa was fortunate in selecting good men as members of her first commission. The saloon and vicious elements combined against one or two of the candidates and secured their defeat. Otherwise the commission would have been exceptionally strong.[3] Mr. Alfred Shock of the National City Bank writes, "The men selected in Ottawa are better than the officials previously elected in the several wards for aldermen."[4]

The general feeling among the citizens of Ottawa is that commission government has been successful in that city. Mr. G. A. Crowden, editor of the Ottawa Fair Dealer, says, "The commission form of government has been in operation since the Spring of 1911, and has proved a boon for this town. There was

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1. Communication from Mayor E. F. Bradford.
2. Communication from Mr. Rector Hitt.
3. Communication from Mr. Rector C. Hitt, Attorney, June 7, 1911.
4. Communication from Mr. A Shock, April 17, 1913.

considerable opposition to it in the first place, but now that it has been in practice over a year and a half, people have come to realize that it is the best thing that has ever happened to Ottawa. The city has been benefited mostly in a financial way, as all petty grafting has been eliminated."[1] The Secretary of the Ottawa Business Mens Association writes, "Commission government has proved a howling success in Ottawa. It is a decided improvement over the old form of government, as we have a better class of officials; and they devote their entire time to the work. The general laws of the city have been materially improved."[2] "As a general thing", says Mr. Rector C. Hitt, City Attorney, "the bettered conditions consist of a very large number of small things—the stopping of leaks, of wastes, the cutting off of useless and unnecessary expense, and getting value received, the same as an individual does in his own business. The water income has been increased some four or five thousand dollars, partly by extensions, but mostly by requiring everyone to pay his proper amount. Police fines, small licenses and other income are more carefully looked after, and have about doubled. The city collector has been dispensed with at a saving of seven or eight hundred dollars; the treasurer has been placed on a salary instead of a commission, and about three hundred dollars saved in this manner. Wherever a saving could be made without lessening the effeciency of the service it has been done, just as the effecient business man would do in the transaction of his own business."[3] Another correspondent writes, "There is a

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1. Illinois State Register (Springfield) Oct. 6, 1912.
2. Communication, January 6, 1913.
3. Address by Rector C. Hitt, Streator, Ill. Feb. 12, 1913. Printed in Daily Independent Times, (Streator, Ill.) Feb. 13, 1913.

wide opinion among the people of our city, but in my judgement the business and property interests strongly favor the commission form. It is an improvement on the old form from the fact that quicker action can be obtained, and matters of importance needing immediate attention can be taken care of; and from the fact that the several departments are in charge of a commissioner."[1]

The mayor of Ottawa receives a salary of $1200 per year, and each commissioner $900.[2] The compensation is therefore sufficiently large to justify the commissioners in devoting considerable time to the city's business. A description of the distribution of the various functions of the government in Ottawa is interesting, as it is in advance of the general plan of organization followed in a majority of the smaller commission government cities. The Council has the general powers given to this body in other cities under the commission form. The Mayor, as Commissioner of Public Affairs, is given general supervision and oversight over all departments and offices of the city; is chief executive officer; grants all licenses and permits except dram shop licenses, has supervision over all public dumping grounds, health officer, city scavenger and all other offices not by ordinance assigned to some other department. The Commissioner of Accounts and Finance has charge of all records, and audits the accounts of all officers receiving and disbursing money; he examines all bills and claims before they are passed upon, and is purchasing agent for all supplies unless otherwise

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1. Communication from Mr. Alfred Shock (Pres. National City Bank) April 17, 1913.
2. Council Proceedings, May, 1911.,p. 3. Ordinances No.1.

provided. It is his duty to procure from public service corporations such reports as they are required to make, and to collect all rentals, franchise charges, etc. The auditor, treasurer, city clerk and all bookkeepers are assigned to him; he has charge of all the printing by and for the council. The Commissioner of Public Health and Safety has supervision of the police and fire departments and all property therein; the city electrician and plumbing inspector. He is chairman of the Local Board of Health and performs all duties pertaining to such Board, and has charge of the enforcement of all traffic regulations. He supervises the Board of Fire Examiners, purchases all horses and apparatus for his department, and has cognizance of all bills coming from the police or fire departments or from the judicial branch of the government.[1]

The Commissioner of Streets and Improvements has authority over all public works including the paving, repair, cleaning and sprinkling of streets and the repair and construction of sewers. He shall approve the estimates of the city engineer and recommend the acceptance of improvements, when completed according to contract. It is his duty to enforce the regulations regarding excavations and obstructions in the streets, to supervise all public service utilities; and report to the Council any failure of the same to observe the requirements of their franchise. The civil engineer, street commissioners, and all inspectors of public improvements are assigned to his department. The Commissioner of Public Property has charge of, and supervision over, the waterworks, public lighting, public

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1911, p. 4-7. Ordinance No.3.

buildings and grounds, parks and playgrounds. He also has supervision over all boulevards, and street parkings and the enforcement of the laws regarding the improvement of the same.[1]

In general, the distribution of the various functions of government is very similar to that found in the larger cities such as Springfield, Decatur and Elgin, and is much more detailed and systematic than the method followed in other commissioned governed cities with a population of from 7000 to 10,000.

The assignment of the commissioners to their respective departments was made without objection, and all appointments to the subordinate municipal service were unanimous.[2] After the organization of the city government had been completed, the commissioners turned their attention to cleaning up the finances of the city. The bonded debt at the time the commissioners assumed control was $168,437.19 and the floating debt $19,691.53, making a total indebtedness of $188,128.72.[3] At the end of the first year of commission government the bonded debt was $152,711.25, showing a reduction during the year of $15,417.47.[4] The floating indebtedness at the end of the year under commission form amounted to $5,319.53, or a decrease of $14,372.00, making a total decrease of $29,570.00 in the aggregate indebtedness during the first year under commission government. In other words, the commissioners in one year paid out of the ordinary revenues $30,097.94 in principal, $9433.00 for in-

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1911, p.4-7, Ordinance No.3.
2. " " " " , May 1911.
3. Official Statement of indebtedness, Commissioner of Accounts and Finances. April 22,1912.
4. Ibid.

terest on bonds and bank overdraft. On March 1, 1913. the bonded debt was $138,938.25, or $29,498.94 less than it was at the time the commissioners came into office.[1]

The treasury at the time the commissioners assumed control was depleted. The previous administration had overdrawn the receipts for 1910-11 in the aggregate of $10,018.85; and there was an overdraft of this amount at one of the banks. The other unpaid amounts (judgements and outstanding contracts) increased the total deficit to $21,313.08. At the end of the first year under the commissioners, the only indebtedness against the city was a balance due on the Illinois River Bridge of $3,819.53 and $1500 in unpaid judgements against the city. There was on hand to apply to the same at that date $2,767.42, which left only $2,552.11 of the old deficit unpaid. Within the past year these outstanding accounts, inherited from previous administrations, have been paid with the exception of a judgement of $1000. While there was an overdraft of $10,018.55 at the end of the last year of the aldermanic administration, at the close of the first year under commission form, the total receipts showed a balance of $2,767.42 over the total disbursements.[2] It should

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1. City Indebtedness when Commissioners Assumed Control.

Bonded indebtedness	$168,437.19.
Floating indebtedness	$ 19,691.53.
Total indebtedness.....	$188,128.72.

City Indebtedness, End of First Year under Commission Form.

Bonded indebtedness	$152,711.25.
Floating indebtedness	$ 5,319.53.
Total indebtedness.....	$158,030.78.

Principal paid off in one year (1911-12).	$30,097.94.
Interest on bonds paid in one year (1911-12)	8,700.00
Interest on overdraft paid in one year " "	733.00
Total indebtedness one year (1911-12).....	$39,570.94.

2. Council Proceedings, April 1912. Ann. Rep. City Treas.,p.21.

be noted, however, that there improvements have been made possible, largely through an increase in the tax rate.

During the present year none of the appropriations have been overspent, and there is now a balance of $37,544.10 in all funds as compared with a balance of $33,753.31 at the corresponding time last year.[1] Neither has it been necessary to issue any tax warrants. The budget for the present year calls for an increased appropriation of $16,203.41. One half of the increase, however, is for the payment of public benefits.[2]

At the end of the first year under commission government, the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance reported that the amount appropriated for general city purposes during that period had been no larger than that appropriated by the previous administration, that no appropriations had been overdrawn and that it had not been necessary to issue any tax warrants. "There is not now," reported the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance on April 22, 1912, "an unpaid outstanding city warrant, and all public benefits, bonded indebtedness, and interest thereon due and payable annually, have been paid."[3] In his first annual statement, the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance states further that the city revenue was increased from all and every source, "due largely to the fact that politics had been entirely eliminated from the business affairs of the city, and that all

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1. Council Proceedings, June 1912, p.17-18.
2. Ibid, Feb. 1912 and Feb. 1913.
3. Council Proceedings April 1912, Report of Commissioner of Accounts and Finance. p.15-16.

revenues, due and owing to the city, had been collected as far as possible."[1]

According to the Mayor of Ottawa, the principal effort during the first year under the commission government was to get the finances of the city in as good condition as possible. Under certain limitations described below it will be necessary to continue this policy during the next two years, and to guard against any expenditures, not absolutely essential to the proper maintenance of each department.[2]

A recent court decision has held that amounts assessed against a city for public benefits are a part of the city's indebtedness.[3] The legal bonded capacity of Ottawa is only $104,914.95, so that today, (including the amounts assessed for public benefits) the city is bonded beyond the legal maximum in the amount of $47,796.30.[4] In July 1914 a bond issue of $60,000 will become due, and in order to make possible the floating of new bonds to retire the maturing ones, the bonded indebtedness must be decreased to at least $104,914.95, which means that during the next year and a half approximately $50,000.00 of the municipal revenues must be applied to former indebtedness rather than to present improvements. The realization of such an end has made necessary a careful handling of the city's finances, as the reduction must be made from the revenue of 1912 and 1913.

The improvement in the financial condition of the city has, in the opinion of many, been one of the most important

1. Ibid, p.15-16.
2. Ibid, Report of Mayor, 1911-12, p.14.
3. Council Proceedings, April 1912, Mayor's Report 1911-12, p.14
4. May 1, 1913.

benefits derived from the commission form of government. Mr. G. A. Crowden, Editor of the Ottawa Fair Dealer, says,"Ottawa has been benefited mostly in a financial way by the change, as all petty grafting has been eliminated."[1] Mr. Alfred Shock (President National City Bank) writes,"There has been a decided improvement in our financial condition due to the conservative management, and careful attention to each department by the respective commissioners."[2]

Because of the lack of funds there have not been as many public improvements as some have desired. The available funds are not sufficient to keep the streets in repair, and there is very little money to apply toward additions and extensions. Due to the recent court decision that the amount assessed against a city for public benefits is a part of the municipal indebtedness, the city has found it impossible to assume any part of the expense incurred for paving and sewer construction.[3] During the first year of commission government practically no additional paving was done. Within the past few months, however, specifications have been drawn up for pavements and sewers which will cost approximately $450,000.00. These improvements have been demanded by the tax payers, and will be paid for entirely by special taxation. The city government will bear no portion of the expense as has been the custom in the past.[4] The commissioners have replanked one bridge over the Fox River, placed a new center in another, and repaired the abutments of a third.[5]

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1. Illinois State Register,(Springfield,Ill.) Oct.6,1912.
2. Communication, April 17, 1913. Also see above page.
3. Council Proceedings April 1912. Annual Report of Mayor E.F.Bradford, p.14.
4. Communication from Commissioner Chas.W.Cambell, Feb.8,1913.
5. Council Proceedings, April 1912. Annual Report of Mayor E.F.Bradford, p:14.

"The police department", says the Mayor at the close of the first year under commission government, "has at all times preserved order and afforded the full measure of protection to our citizens."[1] The police force is very small, consisting of only six men; while the customary ratio is one for each one thousand population. It is the desire of the commissioners to increase the present force as fast as the finances will permit. The Commissioner of Public Health and Safety makes the following summary in regard to the police department: "The affairs of the department are being conducted on a prompt and business-like basis, good order is being maintained, a feeling of harmony exists among the men, and efficient results are obtained."[2] The commissioners found the fire department thoroughly disorganized. The discordant elements were removed, and men qualified for the work were appointed. Altho there are only four regular firemen, efficient results have been secured. The results obtained, and the efficiency of the fire department, are shown by the fact that altho the sixty fires during 1911-12 endangered property valued at over $500,000, the actual loss was approximately $9000.[3] An extraordinary amount of work was necessary in the health department during 1911 and 1912 because of the unusual prevalance of contagious diseases. All houses affected were promptly fumigated, quarantines were strictly enforced, and in 1911-12 two hundred school children were vaccinated by the city.[4] During that year there were 151 deaths or a mortality rate of

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1. Ibid, p.15.
2. Council Proceedings, April 1912. Annual Report of Commissioner Walter Palmer, p.27.
3. Ibid, p.29.
4. Ibid, p.30.

13.7 based on a population of 11,000.[1]

There has been no particular change in the legal regulation of Sunday closing under commission form. In Ottawa, as in many other cities, there is a strong belief that such matters as liquor regulation, Sunday closing, etc., should be determined by public sentiment; but such an attitude is erroneous as long as it involves a violation of existing laws and ordinances. Such laws should either be amended to fit with public sentiment or rigidly enforced. "An effort", says Mr. Alfred Shock, "is being made in Ottawa by the present Commissioner of Public Safety to make the saloons comply more strictly to existing ordinances."[2]

In the Public Property Department, the waterworks, public buildings and grounds, and street lighting, are the most important subdivisions. Ottawa does not maintain her own lighting plant, and all street lighting is provided for by contract. In the waterworks department the receipts for the first year under commission government were $27,067.27 and the disbursements $11,215.28. Deducting $11,712.00 for bonds and interest and $1,509.55 for an emergency expenditure, the total net income for 1911-12 was $2,630.44.[3]

The referendum was applied twice during 1912—on both occassions to authorize the granting of street railway franchises. In February 1912 the Council passed an ordinance granting a franchise to the La Salle County Electric Railway

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1. Ibid, p.30.
2. Communication, April 17, 1913.
3. Council Proceedings, April 1912. Annual Report of Commissioner of Public Property, p.32.

Company. The ordinance was presented to the voters on March 26, 1912 and adopted by a vote of 333 to 9.[1]

In May 1912, after negotiations covering almost a year, the Chicago, Ottawa, and Peoria Railway Company filed a petition asking for the privilege of maintaining its lines on certain streets and across the municipal bridge. As an inducement, the company offered to maintain a series of signal lights on the Illinois River Bridge and along the approaches which lead to the same. The above-named company had attempted to secure a franchise from the Board of Aldermen, but no agreement could be reached as to the proper charge to be made for the use of the city's bridge. The commissioners, upon coming into office rejected both the majority and minority reports of the former Council, and began negotiations for a new contract.[2] The franchise, as finally adopted by the Council in May 1912, granted the railway company the right to operate its lines for eighteen years; contained careful provisions as to the traffic across the Illinois River Bridge, and also regulations concerning speed and service.[3] In consideration, the company agreed to pay $4500 in cash, the monthly sum of $150; and provide for the safety of a specified crossing. The ordinance as outlined above was adopted at a referendum election on June 11, 1912 by a vote of 1033 to 342, or by an approximate majority of 3 to 1.[4]

Ottawa publishes and annual report containing a statement by the Mayor and commissioners regarding the work done

1. Council Proceedings, April 1912, p.7.
2. Council Proceedings, May 1912, p.21.
3. Council Proceedings, May 1912, p.17-21.
4. Council Proceedings, June 1912, p.13.

in their respective departments, and also an account of the city's finances for the year. The narrative part of the report is interesting as it outlines the activity of the city government, and presents a statement of future plans and policies. The annual financial report, however, makes no distinction between the total revenue and receipts and the total expenses and expenditures; there is no attempt to draw up a balance sheet, or to present an account of unit costs or any comparative data.[1] On the whole, nevertheless, the report of the Ottawa commissioners is more valuable than similar reports found in other commission government cities of the same size. In the larger cities of Springfield, Decatur, Rock Island and Jacksonville there is neither an annual report of the officers or an annual financial statement published. Waukegan, Pekin, Kewanee, and Ottawa are the only commission government cities which publish a yearly auditor's report or financial statement, while Ottawa, Kewanee, and Waukegan alone compile an annual report of all the city officers. The monthly financial reports are open to the same criticism offered to the annual report. The monthly account of the Council proceedings is useful, and far in advance of similar publications issued in the cities of Springfield, Moline, Rock Island, Jacksonville and Carbondale, in that all ordinances adopted are given in full, and there is a complete description of the transactions of the Council.[2]

In its legislative capacity the Council has given

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1. See "Proceedings of the Council of the City of Ottawa" for April 1912.
2. See "Proceedings of the City of Ottawa".

careful attention to the adoption of new ordinances and the revision of laws already in operation. The principal ordinances passed during the last two years have been :(1) an ordinance protecting meats from exposure to flies, dust, etc.;[1](2) an ordinance limiting the speed of freight and passenger trains within the city;[2] (3) an ordinance regulating the collection and disposal of grabage, fixing charges for the same and providing for the licensing of all persons engaged in such work;[3] and (4) an ordinance to facilitate the collection of water rates and providing a form of legal procedure for the collection of delinquent accounts.[4] The commissioners have also adopted measures for the metering of all services;[5] for the reorganization of the Local Board of Health, which now consists of the Mayor, the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, and Health Officer;[6] and for the licensing of places of amusement.[7] The city clerk has also been made collector of special assessments, thus centralizing this phase of administration.[8]

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1. Council Proceedings, June 1911, p.4.
2. Ibid, July 1911, p.12.
3. Ibid, July 1911, p.10.
4. Ibid, Oct. 1911, p.6-7.
5. Ibid, Sept.1911, p.10.
6. Council Proceedings, June 1911, p.14.
7. Council Proceedings, June 1911, p.15-16.
8. Council Proceedings, Sept.1911, p.6.

II. Kewanee.

Kewanee is a manufacturing town with a population of 9307. "General dissatisfaction, political squabbles, and alleged mismanagement", are said to have been the principal causes which led Kewanee to take up the commission form of government.[1] As an industrial center, Kewanee has a large foreign population. In the past it was possible for this element, consolidated in two or three wards, to practically control the city Council, and many citizens came to feel that the men elected from these districts did not produce the best of results for the entire city. One of the principal arguments, therefore, in favor of commission government was that the city officers could be chosen without reference to ward lines.[2]

Commission government was adopted in Kewanee on January 24, 1911 by a vote of 1115 to 609, or by an approximate majority of two to one. The total vote (1724) was 72% of the total number of qualified voters.[3]

At the general municipal election held on April 18, 1911, the total vote cast for mayor was 1975, or 82% of the total number of registered voters. The following men were declared elected:-[4]

Mayor:-

Mr. B. F. Baker.

Commissioners:-

Mr. Peter Fischer (Accounts and Finance).

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1. Mr. O.D.Peterson, City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
2. Communication from Mr. B.F.Baker, Mayor, May 29, 1911.
3. Mr. O.D.Peterson, City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
4. Ibid.

Commissioners (cont.):-

Mr. T. E. Nobiling (Public Health and Safety).

Mr. Wm. P. Bauer (Streets and Public Improvements).

Mr. Chas. A. Dunbar (Public Property).

Kewanee, like Moline, was fortunate in selecting capable men as commissioners; and it is to "the credit of the "commission form", says Mr. L. H. Lowe,(editor of the Daily Star Courier),"that men of such ability and character were placed in nomination, as they could not have been prevailed upon to stand as candidates under the aldermanic system."[1] Dr. J. W. Edwards (Pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church) also writes,"A much better class of officials has been selected than could have been under the aldermanic system."[2] The common opinion is that a majority of the commissioners are above the average aldermen, which constituted the governing body of the city immediately prior to the adoption of the commission form.[3]

Mayor B. F. Baker is a former State Senator, and is Vice-President and Treasurer of the Kewanee Boiler Company—a large concern with a national business. Mayor Baker is a man of wide experience and executive ability, and in all respects a "very high grade man."[4] Commissioner Fischer (Accounts and Finance) is a former merchant, and at present is engaged in managing his large agricultural interests. Commissioner Fischer served as alderman at one time with a good record; he is prac-

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1. Communication April 14, 1913.
2. Communication Dec. 30, 1913.
3. Communication from Jas. Andrews, April 16, 1913.
4. Mr. L. H. Lowe (Editor Daily Star Courier); also Mr. O. D. Peterson, City Clerk.

tical, sincere and reliable, and is possessed of fair executive ability.[1] Commissioner L. E. Nobling (Public Health and Safety) is a fairly successful merchant, and a former member of the school board. Mr. Nobling is "regarded as energetic and desirous of giving the best possible public service."[2] His executive ability is regarded as limited.[3] Commissioner Wm. P. Bauer (Streets and Public Improvements) is an ex-alderman of good standing. Commissioner Bauer is a retired farmer of fair executive ability, and is "known as an honest and public-spirited man."[4] Commissioner Chas. A. Dunbar (Public Property) is a retired merchant, a successful business man of fair executive ability, competent, honest, and desirous of giving good service."[5]

Thus it is seen that the Kewanee commission contains one of the most prominent business men in the city, and consists entirely of men who have been more or less successful in the industrial and commercial world. While some are better qulaified than others, from the standpoint of executive ability and previous experience, none of them could be classed as inefficient or incompetent to manage the affairs of their departments. It is of some interest to note that two of the commissioners had been aldermen under the old form, and that the Mayor had been a State Senator.

The mayor of Kewanee receives a salary of $600 per annum and each commissioner $400.[6] At an early meeting, the city

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1. Mr. L.H.Lowe and Mr. O.D.Peterson, City Clerk.
2. Mr. L.H.Lowe; also Mr. O.D.Peterson, City Clerk.
3. Mr. O.D.Peterson, City Clerk.
4. Mr. L.H.Lowe.
5. Mr. L.H.Lowe; also Mr. O.D.Peterson.
6. Council Proceedings.

treasurer, chief of police and chief of the fire department were elected by a unanimous vote of the Council, and the various subordinate officers were duly appointed by the respective commissioners and confirmed by the Council.[1] All appointments were unanimous. The commissioners work in perfect harmony, and there has been no serious disagreement or friction in the Council.

There have been very few public improvements in the way of pavement and sewer construction under the commission form. It is public demand, however, which determines these matters rather than any action by the city government itself. There has been only a slight improvement in the cleaning of the streets and the managing of waterworks.[2] The receipts of the waterworks department for 1911-12 were $14,548.51 and the total expenses $15,641.44, making an excess of maintenance costs over receipts in the amount of $1092.93. Water is furnished free of charge, however, to the hospital, the Y.M.C.A. and to the fire and street departments, which water if paid for, it is estimated would bring a revenue of about $3700. If these credits are allowed, the waterworks would present a slight profit instead of a deficit.[3] The commissioners have already undertaken an investigation of the waterworks system in Kewanee, with the idea of proposing certain changes and improvements.[4] Land has been purchased for a new cemetery, and the issuing of $12,000 in bonds to pay for

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1. Ibid, May 1911, p.16.
2. Communication from Mr. Jas. Andrews, Atty. April 10, 1913.
3. Municipal Officers, Annual Reports for year 1911-12, p.28-30.
4. Council Proceedings, April 1912, p.219.

the same was authorized by a popular vote of three to one.[1]

The police regulation is somewhat better than usual. The efficiency of the police department is due to the Chief of Police, who has held this office continuously for ten or fifteen years, with the exception of a few years when he was sheriff. "The present chief has the capacity", says Mr. Jas. Andrews, "of making the town an orderly town whenever he occupies this position."[2] The city's moral tone has improved, and there is careful respect for all provisions of the liquor ordinances."[3] The efficiency of the fire department is shown by the fact that the total loss sustained from an aggregate of ninety-eight fires during 1911-12 was $24,119.00, while the property endangered and involved was valued at $399,300.00.[4]

The public debt has been lessened under commission government, and the financial condition of the city slightly improved. Mayor B. F. Baker writes, "The expenses of the city were reduced about one-seventh during the first year."[5] During the first year under commission form the corporate receipts, including the balance on hand at the beginning of the year, were $98,855.23 and the total disbursements $69,282.98, leaving a balance on hand at the close of the year amounting to $26,572.25 as compared with a balance of $13,032.16 at the end of the last year of the aldermanic regime. The revenue for the year exceeded the expenditures in the aggregate of $13,540.09. No appropria-

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1. Council Proceedings, Jan.1912, p.161; also Aug.1912, p.81
2. Communication April 10, 1913.
3. Communication from Mr. L.H.Lowe(Editor of The Daily Star Courier) April 14, 1913.
4. Municipal Officers Annual Reports 1911-12. p.27-28.
5. Communication, December 31, 1912.

tions were overspent during the year 1911-12; there were no unpaid warrants outstanding against the city at the close of that year; and the city government was kept well within the available revenues. The condition of the municipal finance, however, was fair when the commissioners assumed control, and considering this fact there have been few extraordinary improvements which can be attribued to the aggressiveness of the present officers.[1]

The auditor's report for the year 1911-12 has the following statement:"A thorough investigation has been made to ascertain that all receipts have been properly accounted for by the city clerk. I have also carefully verified the accounts of the various officers, and find that their collections have been properly turned over to the city clerk and receipted for."[2] In regard to the general system of municipal accounts, the auditor reports: "With the present system of accounting employed in the city clerk's and city treasurer's offices, it has been a pleasure to audit their accounts, each transaction being satisfactorily traceable from the beginning to the end. The filing system now in use in the city clerk's office, permits such officer to present any document at a moments notice. A complete card system of indexing of the city's ordinances has recently been compiled by the clerk, and enables one to find readily any ordinance passed since the incorporation of the city of Kewanee in 1897, with reference to all amendments thereto."[3]

The monthly publication of Council proceedings, receipts, and expenditures of the city of Kewanee is a well arrang-

1. Municipal Officers Annual Reports 1911-12, especially Auditors Report, p.31-32.
2. Municipal Officers Annual Report, Auditors Report, p.31.
3. Municipal Officers Annual Reports, 1911-12, Auditors Report, p.32.

ed and attractive pamphlet.[1] The disbursements from the general fund are arranged according to departments, and include a classification of expenditures with reference to their respective purposes; a statement of the expenditures previously reported in each department; the amount expended in each division during the month; and the total amount of the appropriation expended to date. The statement of receipts in the general fund presents an account of the moneys received during the month, the total disbursements, and the cash on hand. This system of reporting gives one a fairly adequate idea of the purposes of the various expenditures, and also some notion of the financial condition of each department at any particular date. There is no attempt, however, to draw up a balance sheet or present any comparative data. The proceedings of the city Council, altho written in a concise and intelligible manner, are rather brief, and give merely an outline of the business transacted.

Kewanee also publishes an annual report of the various municipal officers. This does not contain a long account by each commissioner of his past accomplishments and future plans. It consists of a city clerk's report; an account of the city's indebtedness, a city treasurer's report, and a brief auditor's report, as well as the detailed reports of the other city officials. On the whole this is a very useful pamphlet, both to the interested citizen and to the student of municipal affairs.[2]

A review of the important ordinances adopted by the Council shows that the commissioners have been more or less

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1. See "Proceedings of the City Council of the City of Kewanee", issued monthly.
2. See Municipal Officers Annual Reports 1911-12, p.32.

active in the field of progressive municipal legislation. They have passed: (1) an ordinance requiring a permit to make excavations and openings in the city streets;[1] (2) an ordinance in regard to the sanitary condition of cess pools, cisterns and ponds;[2] (3) a traffic ordinance;[3] (4) an ordinance licensing peddlers of meats and vegetables;[4] (5) provisions for the inspection of weights and measures;[5] (6) a law prohibiting the free distribution of patent medicines.[6] The health ordinances have also been amended, the commissioners constituted into a Local Board of Health, and an ordinance has been adopted requiring each property owner to provide a proper receptacle for the holding of garbage.[7]

The referendum has been employed only once in Kewanee. In August 1912, the commissioners presented the proposition of issuing $12,000 in bonds for the purchase of forty acres of land for cemetery purposes. The ordinance was upheld by a vote of 332 to 102, or by an approximate majority of three to one.[8] The total vote cast was very small, it being only 434, or 18% of the total number of qualified voters.

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1. Council Proceedings, May 1911, p.17.
2. " " " , July 1911, p.38.
3. " " " , Aug. 1911, p.42.
4. " " " , Oct. 1911, p.106.
5. " " " , Nov. 1911, p.123.
6. " " " , Jan. 1912, p.162.
7. " " " .
8. Ibid, August 1912, p.81.

III. Pekin.

Pekin, a city with a population of 9897, adopted the commission form of government on February 7, 1911, by a vote of 817 to 619, or by a majority of 198.[1] The most important causes leading to the adoption of commission government were: (1) the bad financial condition of the city; (2) the irresponsibility of the existing government, and (3) the fact that the people were tired of "ward-heeler" government. In the primaries there were six candidates for mayor and 33 for commissioner.[2]

One argument against the commission government in Pekin was that efficient men would not seek election, because of the small salary stipulated for cities under 10,000. "This apprehension proved to be groundless," says Mr. B. C. Allensworth, editor of the Pekin Times. "The mayor and commissioners are among our best citizens and representative business men."[3] The mayor, Mr. Charles Duisdieker, is a Democrat and an ex-mayor. He owns and conducts a machine shop and foundry, and is also an accountant. The Commissioner of Accounts and Finances, Mr. H. F. Rust, is a Democrat, and has been a member of several former Councils. Commissioner Rust is an ex-bank cashier, and for the past ten years has been secretary and treasurer of a large organ factory. Mr. J. W. Zuckweiler, Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, is a Democrat, a jeweler, and the only one who has never before held a municipal office. The Commissioner of Public

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1. Communication from City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
2. Ibid.
3. (Springfield) Illinois State Register, October 6, 1912.

Property, C. F. Gehrig, is a Democrat, a cigar manufacturer, and has been a member of the city Council several terms. Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, Ben H. Smith, the only Republican on the commission, is foreman in the shipping and receiving department of a large manufacturing establishment, and has also served two or three terms as alderman.[1] Thus we see that all of the commissioners are successful business men; but that only three of them are engaged in work which demands special executive ability. A majority belong to the same political party, and all but one have at some time served on the board of aldermen.

The commissioners at the very beginning disagreed as to appointments, and there has been occasional friction in the Council. This lack of harmony, however, has tended to decrease during the second year under commission form. Neither has the commission been very active in the field of legislation, as have the Ottawa and Kewanee commissioners.[2]

Probably the greatest improvements in Pekin have been those in the administration of the city's finances, and in the methods of bookkeeping and accounting. The financial condition of the city was very unpromising at the time the commissioners assumed control; the city was about $22,000.00 behind; and its credit was greatly impaired.[3] The floating debt inherited from the previous administration has been reduced about $15,000.00 during the past two years. There has been no reduc-

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1. Communication from City Clerk, Pekin, Ill. April 16, 1913.
2. See Council Proceedings of the City of Pekin.
3. Communication from City Clerk, April 16, 1913.

tion in the bonded debt inasmuch as the bonds outstanding are not issued in serial form, but become payable only at a certain time.[1] Provision for their payment is being made annually, however, by additions to the sinking fund, which has increased some $15,000.00 since the commission form went into operation.[2] On June 8, 1911 when an audit for all accounts for the preceding five years was made, the balance on hand in all funds was $20,891.24, there was $9,993.38 in the warrants outstanding against the city, and the general fund for corporate purposes contained a balance of only $6.94. Ten months later, or at the close of the first fiscal year under commission government, there was a balance of $44,313,52 in all funds, while the total liabilities outstanding against the general fund amounted to $9,525.92 as compared with a similar deficit of $9,993,38 on June 28, 1911.[3] The commissioners have also found it necessary to resort to anticipation warrants, and on January 6, 1913 there was $4,183.39 in general fund scrip outstanding.[4] Thus it appears that there has been little improvement in the financial condition of the city beyond a reduction of the floating debt, and that the municipality has found it impossible to live within its revenue.

Altho there has been only a slight improvement in the financial condition of the city, there has been a complete reorganization of the accounting and bookkeeping system; all

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1. Communication from Commissioner of Accounts and Finances.
2. Ibid.
3. Auditors Report of Edward A Pratt. Audit Co. 1911. Council Proceedings, Aug. 1911.
4. Auditors Report of Edward A Pratt. Audit.Co. 1912. Council Proceedings June 1912.

funds are accounted for by both the city treasurer and the city clerk, and "Pekin today has a city treasurer in fact as well as in name."[1] Upon coming into office, the commissioners secured an audit for all accounts for the five year period from May 1, 1905 to May 1, 1911. This investigation revealed conditions which illustrate in a very striking manner the indifference and lack of responsibilty of the aldermanic system as it is so often administered. Not only were many errors and discrepancies found, but it was discovered that the city clerk's books had not been kept up for over a year, that several funds presented payments far in advance of the budget appropriations, and that there was a wide variance between the necessities of the city and the funds appropriated. The greatest errors and omissions were in the records of saloon and other licenses. One license register was missing and could not be found; many stubs had been misplaced or purposely removed; and "in no place could there be found a complete and correct list of saloon or other licenses therefor." After a careful investigation, the auditors' found a shortage of $3,750.00 in saloon licenses, the greater part of which amount probably went into the pockets of the former office holders.[2]

A new and up-to-date system of municipal accounting was installed early in 1911 by the Pratt Auditing Company, and at the end of the first year under commission government the same company reported that "all moneys had been correctly recorded by the city clerk and city treasurer, and deposited in

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1. Communication from City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
2. Report of Edward A. Pratt, Audit Co. Aug. 9, 1911. Council Proceedings for Aug. 1911, p. 11-39.

the banks subject to check."[1] These improvements in the administration of the city's finances are alone enough to justify the commission form of government in Pekin.

In regard to commission government in Pekin, the editor of the Pekin Times states, "Following the installation of the new officials, all appointive offices were filled with the most competent men. No favoritism has been shown in the conduct of city affairs. It has been demostrated that a fit man at the head of a department will care for matters placed under his supervision fully as well, if not better, than a committee of three or four under the aldermanic system. I believe that it will be generally conceded, that in many respects city affairs have been more satisfactorily conducted under the commission form. However, it does not appear that there has been any material saving in the cost of municipal government."[2] Mr. E. L. Conkling (Lumber Merchant), on the other hand, writes, "I do not know whether commission form is a success here.....The enforcement of the liquor laws is not improved and the conditions financially are about the same. It is a satisfaction, however, to refer complaints to the proper commissioner and secure quicker action."

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1. Report of Edward A. Pratt, Audit Co., May 27, 1912. Council Proceedings for June 1912. p.26-27.
2. Illinois State Register.(Springfield, Ill.) Oct.6,1912.

IV. Carbondale.

Carbondale, a small city with a population of 5600, adopted the commission form of government on January 7, 1911, by a vote of 441 to 172.[1] The inattention of city officials, the lack of responsibility, and charges of public graft led to the adoption of the commission form in this city.

In the primary there were three candidates for mayor and 12 candidates for commissioner. All of the candidates for mayor, and over half of the others were among the most successful and highly respected business men in the city. Of the other half dozen candidates for commissioner, two were ex-saloon keepers, three were local politicians, and one was wholly unfit for the position. In the final election the most able of the candidates for mayor was successful, while two of the city's best business men were selected as commissioners. The other two commissioners were petty politicians; one was an ex-saloon proprietor, and the other was a man without much business experience or business ability. Thus it is seen that four of the strongest men were defeated and that the commission is made up of three successful business men, who have never before served on the municipal Council, and two men of rather mediocre ability, who represent the class of politicians which governed the city in the past.

The mayor, Mr. H. C. Curtis, is proprietor of an extensive milling company. He is a very successful business man, and a person of exceptional qualifications. The Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, Mr. J. J. Winters, is a well-to-do cloth-

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1. City Clerk's Journal.

ing merchant, a good financier, and a public-spirited citizen. Commissioner Winters received the highest number of votes cast for commissioner, in both the primary and final elections. Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, F. M. Hewitt, is the proprietor of a large drug business, and is a man of property. Commissioner Hewitt is energetic, aggressive, and well qualified for his position. Commissioner J. Anderson (Public Property) is a contractor and builder, and a man without much business experience or executive ability. He has served several terms as alderman, and belongs to the old type of city politician. Mr. Marvin Fakes, Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, is an ex-saloon keeper, a former alderman, and a petty politican, with a large personal following, especially among the laboring classes and among those who favor a liberal policy. Altho two of the commissioners belong to the class of politicians which formerly controlled the government, and possess ideas and principles different from those of the majority, there has been perfect harmony in the Carbondale Council. The Commissioner of Streets and Improvements, who is an ex-saloon keeper, has been active as his colleagues in enforcing the law and in driving out bootlegging. National and State politics have been eliminated from city government; there are no petty politics as formerly; and ward lines have completely disappeared.

Some six miles of paving have been installed since commission form went into operation, altho it cannot be said this is due in any direct way to the commission form. The increased amount of paving and sewer should be attributed rather to the awakened interest of the citizens in developing the city.

Commission government has had some influence, it seems, in arousing the people to a greater civic pride; public improvements have been carried forward more rapidly; and there has been a more careful supervision of work done under contract. As a prominent citizen writes, "The public has confidence in the commissioners and it is easier to secure improvements."[1] Water and light are both furnished by private companies, and the functions of government are, therefore, rather simple, being confined mostly to public improvements, the protection of life and health and the financial transactions of the municipality.

Carbondale has been anti-saloon territory for about six years. "Boot-legging" has been less common during the past two years, but this improvement has resulted more from a natural tendency toward a bettered condition, than from any special action on the part of the commissioners. For some time the illegal sale of liquor has been decreasing, partly because public sentiment has been against it, and partly because of the fact that it is a comparatively easy matter to obtain intoxicants from near-by towns. Whatever the cause may be, liquor laws are well enforced, and there is perhaps no "dryer" region in Southern Illinois that the city of Carbondale. The financial condition when the commissioners assumed control was very discouraging. For many years the city had been running behind on its current expenses, the previous administration had anticipated all the taxes for the ensuing year, and the warrants of the city were selling at 75 cents on the dollar.[2] The commissioners

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1. Rev. J. J. Tucker (First M.E. Church) Dec. 31, 1912.
2. Mr. J. J. Winters (Commissioner Accounts and Finance.)

took up the warrants at par, and during the first twelve months paid off over $2000.00 of the indebtedness incurred by the previous administration for general expenses.[1] Today, the credit of the city is much better, and bills are met more promptly. Such conditions have made it impossible for the city to live within its revenues, and during 1911-12 over $8000.00 of the 1912 tax levy was anticipated.[2] Comparative statistics are not available, but the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance reports that the running expenses of the city were decreased $4500.00 during the first year under commission government.[3]

Probably the strongest proof of the success of commission government in this city is that its experience with the commission form has led the neighboring town of Murphysboro to adopt the new system. Within the past few months two other Southern Illinois cities—Cairo and Harrisburg—have begun operations under the commission form. The general concensus of opinion in Carbondale is that better men have been secured; that the present government is more responsible, more business-like and more honest; and that "the people come nearer getting full value for all money expended."[4]

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1. Annual Auditors Report, 1911-12 p.
2. Commissioner J.J.Winters.
3. Ibid.
4. Illinois State Register (Springfield Ill.) Oct. 6, 1913. Mr. Bert E. Hill, Editor Southern Illinois Herald.

V. Spring Valley.

Spring Valley, a city of 7035 in population, adopted the commission form of government on February 14, 1911, by a vote of 463 to 417.[1] The principal causes leading to the adoption of the new plan were the general dissatisfaction with the aldermanic system, and the incompetency of some of the officials. In the campaign for adoption it was urged that the short ballot and the elimination of politics would insure the election of a more efficient class of officers.[2]

The general qualifications of the men elected as commissioners are good, but it cannot be said that they are in all cases men of extraordinary ability or that they all come from the better class of citizens. The mayor is a Republican and a banker of twenty years experience; the Commissioner of Accounts and Finance is a Democrat and a labor union official; the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety is a Democrat and has been in business about twenty years; the Commissioner of Streets and Improvements is a merchant of ten or fifteen years experience, while the Commissioner of Public Property is a Republican, a saloon keeper and an ex-member of the Council.[3] As Mr. G. F. Wagner,(City Attorney) writes, "All of our commissioners are business men, and altho they are possibly not as successful, on the whole, as men who served under the old form, they have been much more satisfactory as far as running the city is concerned."[4]

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1. City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
2. Communication from City Clerk April 16, 1913; Mayor C.W.Knapp April 23, 1913.
3. Communications from Mayor C.W.Knapp, April 23, 1913.
4. Communication from Mr. G. F. Wagner, City Atty, April 9,1913.

Party politics has been entirely eliminated from the city government, and the men work in perfect harmony.

The concensus of opinion in Spring Valley is that commission form has been a success. Mr. Gilbert F. Wagner, Attorney, says,"In my opinion commission government has been very successful, and it is an improvement over the former style of government in that it comes nearer being a government by the people, and gives the people a better opportunity to show their attitude in reference to the passage of ordinances."[1] Dr. R. A. Smith, President of the Spring Valley Development Association also writes, "The commission form of government has proved a success in this city and it is very much of an improvement over the old form."[2] It is also the general belief that the maintenance of order and the enforcement of the liquor regulations have been much better. Nothing new in the way of regulating liquor traffic has been provided for, but "the saloons are conducted in an orderly manner."[3]

The financial condition of the city has been greatly improved. The city is now out of debt, and has a substantial balance in the treasury, which has never been known before. Former administrations have usually had a large amount of floating indebtedness, but under commission form all debts have been promptly taken care of and the credit of the city is such that money can now be borrowed at 5% where formerly 7% was demanded.[4] Streets have been better cleaned and placed in a fair state of

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1. Ibid.
2. Communication from Mr. G.F.Wagner, city atty.,April 9, 1913.
3. Ibid.
4. Communication from Mayor C.W.Knapp, April 23, 1913; also Mr. G.F.Wagner, Dr. R.A.Smith, and Mr. C.N.Hollerich.

repair, and over a mile and a half of pavement has been constructed, while prior to the adoption of the commission form there had been no paving at all." There have been more public improvements the past two years than in the preceding ten", writes Dr. R. A. Smith.[1]

The general attitude of the community toward commission government is friendly, and what opposition there is comes from dissatisfied and unsuccessful politicians. The citizens are manifesting a greater interest in municipal government, and have recently organized a development association which takes an active interest in civic affairs.[2]

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1. Communication from Dr. R.A.Smith, Pres. Spring Valley Development Assn.; also Mayor C.W.Knapp; Mr. G.F.Wagner, and Mr. C.N.Hollerich.
2. Communication from Mayor C.W.Knapp.

VI. Braceville.

Braceville, with a population of 971, is the smallest village in Illinois operating under the commission form of government. Commission government was adopted in Braceville on February 7, 1911 by a vote of 56 to 16.[1] The principal causes leading to its adoption were that the village government was too expensive and the officials incompetent and dishonest. As a result of these conditions the village was heavily in debt with practically nothing to show for the indebtedness.[2]

Braceville has at present a better class of officials than ever before, and as one correspondent writes, " Commission government has been a success in this town. Under the former system the village was in debt. Today there is a better class of officers, the administration has been improved, the debt paid off and a new lighting system installed."[3] The present office holders have the interest of the village at heart, and "none of them are,in any sense of the word,men who put their own interests first.[4] The laws have been better enforced, and a number of important ordinances which had been allowed to fall into disuse have been revived. The greatest improvements have been a cleaning up of a past indebtedness, and a reorganization of the finances of the village. The city clerk writes that past indebtedness of over $3000 has been paid off with less than half of the revenue enjoyed by previous boards.[5] There have

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1. City Clerk, April 16, 1913.
2. Communication from Mayor Geo. Barton, May 26, 1911.
3. " " " " Pastor First M.E. Church.
4. " " " " Mayor Geo. Barton, Dec. 31, 1912.
5. " " " " City Clerk; also Mayor Barton and Rev. W.J.Hurstt.

been very few public improvements, due to the fact that all available funds have been employed to restore the credit of the village.[1]

There is a common feeling among the commissioners of Braceville that the commission form of government act should be amended so as to provide for smaller towns. The Braceville commissioners have found it impossible to comply strictly with all the provisions of the law, which was drawn up primarily for the government of larger cities, and which makes no distinction between communities of varying size. The Braceville commission, for instance, has found it somewhat irksome to be compelled to meet every week and talk over the same matters, and the suggestion comes from Mayor Barton that every other week would be often enough for the regular meetings.[2]

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1. Communication from Mayor Geo. Barton, December 1, 1912.
2. Ibid; also communication May 26, 1911.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The preceding survey of municipal conditions in the ~~twelve~~ cities under commission government shows that the new system has met with success in Decatur, Elgin, Moline, Ottawa, Kewanee, Pekin, Spring Valley and Carbondale; in Springfield there has been a great improvement in the administration of municipal affairs, despite the fact that the lack of harmony among the commissioners has recently given rise to considerable popular criticism; while in Rock Island, Waukegan and Jacksonville, commission government has been a disappointment in some respects. In ~~the~~ first eight cities mentioned above, a majority of the commissioners are men of fair ability; Springfield has a well qualified commission, but the members of the governing body do not work in harmony; in Waukegan the commissioners possess little business experience and lack public spirit; in Rock Island the commissioners are politicians and are controlled by old ideals; while in Jacksonville the commission consists of men of inferior qualifications. Thus it is seen that in the last analysis the success of commission government depends upon the men elected to office, and the question naturally arises to what extent has commission government secured a more efficient type of municipal officers.

One of the principal merits in behalf of the commission form is that men of a new and higher type will be attrac-

ed to the municipal service. But an investigation of the ten largest commission governed cities in Illinois shows that out of a total of fifty mayors and commissioners, fifteen, or approximately one-third, had held positions as mayor or alderman under the former system; seven had been city clerks, city engineers or comptrollers; while five had occupied political positions outside of the municipal service. Thus it appears that there has been no revolutionary change in the class of men elected to office, since over fifty per cent have at some time or another held a public office. In all of the cities, however, with the exception of Jacksonville, Waukegan and Rock Island, the ex-mayors, aldermen and city employees now holding office are above the average of such officials under the aldermanic system, and in many cases they were elected to their present positions on the basis of their official records under the former regime.

Judged from the standpoint of previous business experience and executive ability, it cannot be said that the commissioners as a whole possess any exceptional qualifications. In each of the cities considered it was urged at the time of adoption that the new plan of government would draw men of wide business experience and training into the municipal service. This expectation has been realized in only two or three of the smaller cities, where the mayor and commissioners are not required to give any definite amount of time to their official duties.[1] In the larger cities where full time must be given, the increase in salary, greater dignity

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1. See Appendix, p.

and responsibility of the positions have not been sufficient inducements to attract the most capable citizens to give up their regular occupations. An analysis of the personnel of the various commissions shows that in all but three of the cities under consideration the mayor and commissioners as judged by the standards of business experience are only average men of average ability, although somewhat above the general run of municipal officials under the aldermanic system. The commission form of government will not inevitably secure better men; it merely increases the probability that a more capable class of officials will be obtained, and by providing a simple business-like system of government makes it possible for men of the same or an improved type to achieve more satisfactory results.

The Illinois plan of commission government concentrates responsibility and power in the hands of five commissioners, divides the administrative work among these men, and makes each one responsible to the council and to the people for his share of the work. This is the most striking feature of the Illinois system of commission government, and is the one which is essential to any plan of government by commission. From all of the Illinois cities without exception comes the information that the commission form has been more business-like, that there has been no shifting of responsibility and that popular complaints and requests meet with prompt attention. Such results have been realized even in Rock Island, Waukegan and Jacksonville where the new plan is meeting with less popular approval than elsewhere.

The concentration of the powers of municipal government under the commission form, however, has not been carried as far as it should be. In Springfield, for instance, there exists a park board, which is a corporation independent of the city government. The justices of the peace and the town supervisors are ~~chosen at separate elections~~, and the schools are under independent jurisdiction, all of which results in a multiplicty of administrative districts and the confusion of the voters. Whether or not responsibility will be completely fixed, depends also upon the assignment of functions and duties in the various cities. For example, in Springfield, the largest city under commission form, the mayor is given the power to issue and revoke liquor licenses, while it is the duty of the commissioner of public health and safety to enforce all saloon regulations. The latter officer is thus deprived of one of the most effective means of securing control, and is given the responsibility of office without the adequate power to enforce the same.

Closely connected with the advantages obtained from the centralization of responsibily are those arising from the fact that commission government has made possible the application of business methods to the administration of municipal affairs. With the powers of city government rigidly defined and restricted by state law, and with the broad extension of the functions to be performed by a municipality, the management of cities has become largely a matter of business instead of government. Legislation under such conditions has become

a secondary factor and the greater part of the time of the average city council it taken up in dealing with affairs which have many points in common with the transactions of an ordinary business concern. Yet one should be careful not to overdraw the analogy between the government of a city and the management of a private corporation, since the policy of the former must of necessity be moulded to fit public opinion and demand. Recognizing this limitation let us see to what extent commission form in Illinois cities has resulted in a more business-like system of government.

In the larger cities[1] with the exception of Waukegan, the commissioners give their undivided attention to their respective departments; they maintain offices in the City Hall; council meetings are conducted in a manner analogous to the procedure of a board of directors; experts have been appointed to manage such utilities as the light and water plants; the routine clerical work has been systematized, and there has grown up in the city government a spirit which is somewhat akin to professionalism. For the cities of 20,000 population and over, the commission form has provided a scheme of government which is in operation not merely once a week but every day of the year. The commissioners may be found in their respective offices at all times to hear complaints, receive advice and attend to any matter of public business which may arise. In the smaller cities where the commissioners are

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1. Springfield, Decatur, Elgin, Jacksonville, Moline, and Rock Island.

engaged in private business and give only such time as they can spare from their regular occupations, the situation is somewhat different. Observation has shown, however, that the commissioners in the smaller cities give a greater amount of attention to the city's business than did the alderman and mayor, and there has been a movement to increase the importance of the city clerk by readjusting his duties with the idea of providing for some official who will give his entire time and attention to the routine work of administration.

In some of the cities where the commissioners give their whole time to public affairs, the commissioner of accounts and finance and the commissioner of public property have taken charge of the routine work of their departments. Thus in Moline and Rock Island respectively the commissioner of accounts and finance has assumed the duties of the city clerk; in Decatur the commissioner of public property is an engineer and has taken over the direct management of the water and light departments. On the other hand in the city of Springfield, the commissioner of public property depends largely upon expert subordinates; while in Moline, Elgin and Waukegan, the commissioner of public property is a man who possesses very little technical knowledge regarding the actual management of a water and light plant. In each of the above mentioned cities, the commissioner has secured the services of an expert engineer who looks after the technical administration, while he himself manages the general details of the department. The marked improvements in the water departments of Springfield, Moline, Elgin and Waukegan, show that this arrangement

has been successful. In Illinois the commissioners are not elected to a certain department but are assigned to their respective divisions after election. Often a person has become a candidate for commissioner upon the supposition that if election he would be placed in actual charge of a certain part of the city's work, but this has not been universal, and the usual practice has been to consider a candidate with reference only to his general business qualifications. The commission in Illinois cities can be better described as a board of amateur administrators whose members depend upon their professionally trained assistants for technical advice. Rock Island affords a good example of the dangers which may arise where there is a lack of such advice and assistance. Upon the organization of the city government of Rock Island under commission form, it was decided that the commissioner of public property should assume direct control of the waterworks. But that official is a retired merchant and knows nothing of the technical administration of a water plant. After a few months of unsuccessful experience this arrangement was abandoned and the services of a water engineer were secured. In contrast to this state of affairs is a plan followed in Moline where the commissioner of public property, an insurance agent by occupation, has employed an expert bacteriologist and engineer to supervise the actual management of the water-works system. The improvements in the water department of Moline are evidence of the advantages of such a policy. In Waukegan the reorganization of the waterworks has been due entirely to the efforts

of the waterworks engineer as the commissioner of public property is a lawyer and pays very little attention to his department. There has been a tendency in all of the larger cities with the exception ofSpringfield for the commissioner of accounts and finance to take over the clerical and accounting work of his department. In Decatur this has been done without the help of experts, and although the administration of the finances is honest, , there has been little improvement in the methods of accounting and bookkeeping. In Springfield, Elgin, Waukegan, Moline and Pekin, on the other hand, expert auditor's have been employed to install new systems of accounting with the result that there has been an improvement in financial methods. Thus it appears that one of the great advantages of the commission form is the combination of amateur service with purely expert advice.[1]

The fact that commission government in Illinois has provided a more business-like administration of public affairs, is shown first by the readjustment of the finances in these cities where it has been adopted, second by the extensive public improvement, and third by the reorganization of the police and fire departments. In each of the municipalities investigated the bonded debt has been materially decreased, and in all but two, a large floating indebtedness has been entirely wiped out or greatly reduced. Commission government has been slightly more expensive, but the increased expenditure has averaged only five or six per cent, and has been due largely to the greater salaries paid the Mayor and Commissioners. The general consensus of opinion is that the added expense has been more than offset

1 - MUNRO: The Government of American Cities, p.

by a strict collection of all money due the city, by the various savings and economies practiced by the commissioners, and by an honest administration of all funds. In Springfield, Moline, Waukegan, Pekin, and Kewanee entirely new systems of accounting have been established, and although they are by no means perfect, they represent a marked improvement over former systems.

Commission government cities, however, have been backward in providing for the health and sanitation of the community. In Springfield alone is there a definitely organized health department, and there the appropriation is so small that its activities are restricted. In the other cities there is no definite health program and this phase of the municipal service is still carried on according to the small town plan. In a slight majority of the cities considered, there has been some advance in the moral tone, but in Springfield, Rock Island and Waukegan it cannot be said that there has been much improvement. In Springfield the lack of improvement has been due to the popular demand of the electors as expressed in a referandum vote; in Rock Island and Waukegan the lax enforcement of the law is to be attributed to the character of the men elected as commissioners, and to certain local conditions which make a strict enforcement of the law difficult. In all of the cities, however, there has been no favoritism toward the saloon-keeper or gambler, and the liquor interests have lost their former control over the city government.

From each of the cities under investigation comes the information that national and state politics have been entirely eliminated from the city government and that Republican and Demo-

crat work hand in hand. In Springfield, especially, the control of the municipal government by local factions of the leading national parties has been broken up.[2] Personal and petty politics, on the other hand, remain to some degree in nearly all of the cities, and play a more or less important part in appointments and in determining the alignment of the commissioners upon matters of public policy. Under any plan of democratic government where the administration of public affairs is placed in the hands of popularly elected officials, local politics will almost necessarily exist. In a majority of the commission government cities, however, the general feeling is that petty politics have been reduced to a minimum.[1] In Jacksonville, Waukegan, Rock Island and Pekin local political factions exist as formerly. The commission government statute provides a number of safeguards against such influences, but whether or not they will be eliminated in any city depends upon the character and qualifications of the men elected, and upon the care and judgment exercised by the voters in making a choice of officials. In all of the cities, ward lines and ward politics have disappeared, and with them have fallen such evils as the domination of the ward boss, partiality, and "logrolling". Local and sectional jealousies have been done away with and the government of the city is considered as a unit. Municipal government has been more honest under commission form, and there has been no implication of graft or corruption, while formerly such conditions were very common.

Having discussed the improvements made in those Illinois municipalities which have adopted the commission form of government, let us now direct our attention to a consideration of some of the

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1- Springfield, Decatur, Moline, Elgin, Carbondale, and Kewanee.
2- See Chapter, III.

~~some of the~~ defects of the system. As noted in Chapter I the recall should be reduced to twenty-five per cent, and more definite requirements should be made regarding the publication of municipal accounts. The commission government law makes no distinction between cities and villages, and hence the two villages operating under its principles have found it impossible to meet the requirements and demands of the law which was drawn up primarily for the government of cities. Then too for cities under 10,000 population, especially those without municipal light and water plants, the number of commissioners might be reduced to three without impairing the efficiency and responsibility of the government.

The experience with commission government in Springfield, Rock Island and Waukegan where there is a lack of harmony among the commissioners shows that there is a certain weakness in the commission form of government in that each commissioner is equal in power, the mayor is only a nominal executive, and there is no head to the administration. In the cities above-mentioned, the constant friction has decreased the efficiency of the city government, and made unified progressive action very difficult of attainment. Such a state of affairs would be obviated, or at least its harmful effects would be eliminated perhaps, if there were some officer who had a co-ordinating or controlling influence over the other commissioners. On the other hand to increase the power of the mayor to any great extent would destroy the very thing commission government aims to secure - responsibility. The mayor, however, might be given greater powers such as that to require reports and to make

assignments of the various commissioners without destroying the element of responsibility. It should be noted that in Moline, Decatur and Elgin and in a majority of the commission-governed cities where the commissioners act in harmony, the mayor exercises an extra-legal power of control and co-ordination, and it is in these cities that the commission government is meeting with the greatest success.

In the larger cities of Springfield, Decatur and Elgin the commissioners have paid very little attention to the larger problems of legislation, and their collective activities have been confined almost exclusively to the working out of administrative details. This tendency gives rise to the conclusion that commission form is not the final solution of the problem of municipal government. The goal toward which we are working today is home rule in municipal affairs, and the experience in Illinois leads one to doubt whether a small board of administrative officials can deal adequately with important matters of local legislation. When home rule in municipal affairs is realized, commission government will perhaps have to undergo modification or give way to a system which will embody all of its good features and permit at the same time an adequate exercise of municipal legislative power.①

The experience in Rock Island, Waukegan and Jacksonville refutes also the argument that commission government will inevitably result in effieient administration. The common notion that commission government needs but to be adopted to produce good government, is erroneous and must be abandoned. The commission form undoubtedly enlarges the opportunities for

① - See above, p. 11-12; also 126.

a more business-like administration of public affairs, and makes popular government more possible of attainment. To be a success, however, it demands that voters have sufficient interest in civic pride to secure the election of good men and once these men are in office to enforce the responsibility which is placed upon them and which is capable of being adequately enforded under the Illinois commission form of government law.

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